Fragmented systems for collective action

Can the institutional architecture in East Asia carry the challenge of climate change?

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Abstract

The countries of the East Asian region have responded to the challenge of climate change through multiple institutional channels that together form a complex institutional architecture. This fragmented structure resembles the increasing governance fragmentation on the climate change issue area, occurring on the international level. The objective of this thesis is to evaluate the potential for climate change governance within the institutional complex in East Asia. The aim is to contribute to our understanding of under what conditions fragmented governance architectures may be effective means of climate change governance. Based on a rationalist point of departure, this thesis starts by analyzing the interest configuration and power distribution, as well as the potential for leadership, in the East Asian region, in order to determine the demand for cooperation in this setting. Moving on, it evaluates the institutional supply by analyzing the degree of coherence or fragmentation within the structure. Findings indicate that the complexity of institutional arrangements has a comparative advantage in this region, as compared to an integrated approach, but that lack of clear leadership may hamper progress towards deeper cooperation. Traditional mitigation efforts are not high on the regional agenda, but practical cooperation on transition efforts, such as renewable energy and energy efficiency are shared concerns by the powerful actors in the region.

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All flaws in this thesis are my own.

Oslo, 23 May 2012

Siri Eritsland

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List of abbreviations

ACCI:	ASEAN Climate Change Initiative
ACP:	Asia Co-Benefit Partnership
ADB:	Asian Development Bank
AECEN:	Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network
AFCCC:	ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Framework on Climate Change: Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry towards Food Security
AP Seminar:	Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change
APC:	Asia Pacific Community
APEC:	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
APP:	Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate
APT:	ASEAN Plus Three
ASCC:	ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community
ASEAN:	Association of South East Asian Nations
ASEAN+3:	ASEAN and China, Japan and ROK
ASEAN+6:	ASEAN and China, Japan, ROK, Australia, New Zealand and India
ASEAN-ISIS:	ASEAN-Institutes of Strategic and International Studies
AWGCC:	ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change
CAEC:	China-ASEAN Environment Cooperation Center
CCP:	Chinese Communist Party
CDM:	Clean Development Mechanism
CEPEA:	Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia
CINC:	Composite Index of National Capability
CO_2:	Carbon Dioxide
COW:	Correlates of War
CSIS:	Center for Strategic and International Studies
DPRK:	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
DRC:	Chinese Government's Development Research Center of the State Council
EACP:	East Asia Climate Partnership
EAEC:	East Asian Economic Caucus
EAF:	East Asia Forum
EAS:	East Asia Summit
EAS EMM:	East Asia Summit Environmental Ministers Meeting

EAVG:	The East Asia Vision Group
EDSM:	ASEAN Protocol for Enhanced Dispute Settlement Mechanism
ETS:	European Emission Trading System
EU:	European Union
FTA:	Free-Trade Agreement
FTAAP:	Free-Trade Agreement for Asia-Pacific
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GMS:	Greater Mekong
IDGEC:	Institutional Dimension of Global Environmental Change
IEA:	International Energy Agency
IUCN:	ASEAN Agreement on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
LLAP:	Law of the least ambitious program
NAFTA:	North American Free-Trade Agreement
NDRC:	China's National Development and Reform Commission
NEASPEC:	North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation
NSD:	Norwegian Social Science Database
NUS:	National University of Singapore
OECD:	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PECC:	Pacific Economic Cooperation Council
ROK:	Republic of Korea
RTA:	Regional Trading Agreements
TEMM:	The Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting among Japan, China and Korea
TPP:	Trans-Pacific Partnership
UN ESCAP:	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFCCC:	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
US:	United States
USCREP:	US-China Renewable Energy Partnership
WW2:	World War II
ZOFPFAN:	South East Asian Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality

1 Introduction

Leaders of the East Asian region have been accused of not responding effectively to one of the region's most pressing issues: climate change[1]. If critics are right, the lack of response does not stem from inadequate motivation on the leaders behalf. The East Asian region is one of the world's most exposed regions in terms of climate change vulnerability, with 1.4 billion people living in low-lying costal areas, and reoccurring natural disasters haunting the region.[2] Public support for climate change efforts is substantial[3], and high economic growth renders mitigation efforts more cost efficient here, than in so-called mature economies[4]. Despite these factors, a region-wide arrangement for climate change mitigation, as exemplified by the European Emission Trading System (ETS), seems like a world away from regional planning in East Asia. The region has instead responded to climate change through multiple institutional arrangements that together form an institutional structure that is striking in its complexity. The structure has no core and no umbrella institution. It is messy and incoherent, but is it ineffective?

The first response to the critics may be that it is unrealistic to expect the East Asian region to response in a unified manner. The region includes countries as diverse as China, Japan, South Korea (ROK from now) North Korea, Cambodia, Brunei, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. China and Japan are economic powerhouses[5], and major contributors of carbon emissions on a global scale, while Laos and Myanmar are struggling to "keep the lights on". Political organization also ranges from authoritarian military rule (e.g. Myanmar), to stable democracy (e.g. Japan and ROK).

The second objection represents the point of departure for this thesis, namely that the multifaceted and fragmented way that East Asia has in fact engaged in climate change efforts, may represent an institutional architecture that is more in line with the multidimensional features of the problem of climate change. The general logic of institution building in the East

[1] See: Rozman (1998), Feigenbaum (2011)
[2] These people are in risk of losing the areas where they make their livelihood, from rising sea levels (Schaffer 2010: 45). Natural disaster reported to have increased in frequency is: heat waves, tropical cyclones, prolonged dry spells, intense rainfall, tornadoes, snow avalanches, thunderstorms, and severe dust storms.
[3] Figures are collected from World Bank (2009). Survey results are from China, Japan, Indonesia and Vietnam.
[4] It is generally argued that during periods of high economic growth, efforts to reform the industrial structure is cost efficient because of the high investment level directed towards building infrastructure.
[5] China surpassed the US as the world's biggest emitter in 2007 (Vidal and Adam 2007)

Asian region has followed a building blocks approach, where incremental developments have provided the region with a wide array of partly overlapping institutions. Rather than a "grand design", regional cooperation is characterized by flexible processes of political and economic integration (Okamoto 2011). The resulting patchwork structure does not necessarily represent "costly duplications" and an "ineffective structure", but may rather represent a better institutional fit to the complex problem it is supposed to govern.[6]

Climate change may indeed be considered a unique governance task, because it is linked both in cause and effect to most of our sectors of human activity. Different interest constellations make up different sectors, and negotiating overarching institutions to create integrated architectures may lead the whole process into a political deadlock (which is the current state of global climate change negotiations). David Victor (2006, 2010, 2011) has argued that rather than focusing our attention on constructing single-issue architectures that may not be in line with the political reality, we should look at the institutions we already have and evaluate whether they can function as building blocks to more optimal solutions. In such endeavors, what matters is the *potential* for effective cooperation within different structures. This thesis seeks to answer the call, and evaluate the potential for effective cooperation within the East Asian structure.

1.1 Knowledge gap and its relevance

Much scholarly attention has been directed towards the emerging cooperative structures in East Asia, and many have studied fragmentation of climate change governance.[7] However, to the knowledge of this author, there appears to be only one major study of climate change governance in East Asia. This study was done by CSIS, an American non-partisan think tank that provides foreign policy advice to the American government. The similar approach taken by this research institution, may pose a methodological challenge to this study by informing the research process in an excessive way, but it does not render the study obsolete. The main reason is that the empirical study done by CSIS was not located within a theoretical context, and did therefore not contribute to cumulative knowledge within the academic discourse. If

[6] See: Capie (2004: 164) for a discussion on the potential for duplication of institutions operating within the East Asian and the Asia Pacific geographical area.

[7] For studies on the emerging institutional structure in East Asia see: Katzenstein (1996), Ravenhill (2009), Acharya (2004, Loewen (2006). For studies on climate change governance fragmentation, some of the most important contributions come from: Keohane and Victor (2010), Victor (2010), Biermann et.al (2009), Oberthür and Stokke (2011).

my study is in accordance with the findings of this major research project, this will constitute a good starting point for contributing to theory development.

Theoretically the knowledge gap lies in the fact that we do not have a satisfactory understanding of cooperative structures that are only loosely integrated in the sense that different institutions overlap and form interlocking structures. In fact, there is currently no consensus on how to conceptualize these structures (Biermann et.al 2009). Governance architecture is a concept that is widely used.[8] Biermann et.al (2009:15) claim that architectures describe the "*meta-level* of governance", but they are still narrower than the concept of order, which "reflects the organization of the entire system of international relations".[9] Governance architectures may be located on a continuum that ranges from completely fragmented structures, to strictly integrated structures. Institutional complexes are located in between these two ideal types. Within institutional complexes, institutions may interact so as to form coherence within the structure, but they may also interact in a conflictive manner, causing disruptive interaction within the complex. These synergistic or conflictive interaction patterns have become one of the main areas of attention for theorists looking for potential for effective governance within such structures. Keohane and Victor (2010) have labeled this form of institutional architecture for regime complexes, while Oberthür and Stokke call them institutional complexes. As institutions are only a wider category than that of regimes, the concepts of regime complex and institutional complex will be used interchangeably in this thesis.[10] Semantics aside, according to Oberthür and Gehring (2011: 28): "none have so far provided a comprehensive picture of the problems and promises of interaction."

The practical significance of the engagement of Asian countries in climate change action can hardly be exaggerated, and regional solutions might be one piece of the puzzle. In a region that includes the world's largest emitter, as well as other important non-annex 1 countries that are wary to commit to reduction obligations within the UNFCCC, cooperative efforts outside of the global mechanism becomes interesting. On a more general account, the East Asian

[8] Biermann et.al (2009), Victor Cha (2010).

[9] Biermann et.al (2009: 15) further claim that order has a normative bias because it presumes a certain extent of internal coherence. They argue that architecture is a normatively neutral concept that includes both intended and unintended interaction effects.

[10] Given that the literature applies both concepts to describe the same phenomenon, I see no need to exclude one of the labels in this thesis.

countries are growing in prominence on the international arena to such an extent that the emerging regional cooperative structures should be of interest within policy circles of international relations more generally[11].

1.2 Focus and research question

The objective of this study is to evaluate the potential for effective climate change governance within the institutional complex in East Asia. This will not be done by isolating each institution, study their respective capabilities, and make inferences over regime effectiveness. The proliferation of governance institutions on the international stage has rendered this approach increasingly problematic, because it has become hard to argue that institutions evolve and govern problems independent from other institutions. The dependent variable will therefore be regime complex effectiveness, rather than the more conventional regime effectiveness.[12] The wider aim of this study is to contribute to our understanding of, under which conditions institutional complexes may be effective means of climate change governance. Such knowledge may serve to illuminate the promises and pitfalls of governance fragmentation, and by that provide a practical contribution to the policy dialogue both on climate change governance and on regional cooperation in East Asia. The empirical research question for this thesis is:

> *What is the potential for effective climate governance within the regime complex in East Asia?*

This thesis also has theoretical aspirations. It is an undemanding task to point out the need for analytical tools that will assist us in comprehending the consequences of the institutional complexity we observe on the climate change governance area in general. A more complex assignment is rather to determine whether the tools already established enables us to analyze this question in a satisfactory way. Research on institutional interaction has began as a strand within regime theory about ten years ago, but the theoretical grounding for analyzing institutional complexes remains uncertain. The theoretically grounded research question thus becomes:

[11] Particularly scholars of International Political Economy have begun to direct attention towards this region, see: Katzenstein (1996), Ravenhill (2009)

[12] According to Oberthur and Gehring (2011: 25), research on institutional interaction and on regime effectiveness are closely related, but the he former branch ”employs a distinct perspective and transcends the focus on individual institutions”.

Is regime theory able to capture the potential for collective action on climate within fragmented governance architectures?

In order to answer these two research questions, the analysis will proceed in two steps. It will start from the rationalist point of departure that conventional regime theory is based on. This means that the potential for effective cooperation will not be formulated in general terms, but will be based on an analysis of specific actor characteristics that are thought to increase the demand for intergovernmental cooperation. Therefore, this first part of the analysis will be agent based, and deductively derived assumptions over actor specific dimensions will be in focus. Three dimensions are conventionally applied when analyzing the preconditions for regime effectiveness, namely: interest constellation, power distribution and potential for leadership. These dimensions will be applied to the most important actors in the region, namely: China, Japan, ROK, and ASEAN[13]. Interest, power and leadership may be characterized as the driving forces behind a given regime complex, or as the deeper structures that the complex is embedded in.

Moving forward, the second part of the analysis concentrates on the supply of institutions instead. It relates to a systemic level, and will provide an institutional analysis of the institutional complex in East Asia in its own right. Firstly, I will aspire to provide a descriptive analysis of the different features of this complex. Secondly, I will advance to an analysis of the degree of coherence within the East Asian regime complex. This second part of the analysis applies the less developed branch of regime theory, namely institutional interaction theory. The combination of an agent based and an institutional analysis should make out a sound foundation for drawing inferences over the potential for effective climate governance within the regime complex in East Asia, because it addresses both the demand side and the supply side of international cooperation.

This thesis does not aspire to contribute to theoretical development by setting out to test hypotheses derived from regime theory. For that, this thesis does simply not embody sufficient analytical rigor. Victor (2012) argued in a video seminar that there is a need for more formal theories concerning state behavior within regime complexes. Oberthür and

[13] ASEAN will in this regard be analyzed as a single actor. It may be argued that this is a problematic approach, given the low levels of supra-nationality that this institution inhibits. However, ASEAN is commonly referred to as an actor in East Asian relations. For instance, China calls their cooperation with ASEAN for a bilateral arrangement.

Gehring (2011: 51) claim that institutional complexes are an "underresearched" theme in the study of international cooperation. That being the case, then there is a need for a plausibility probe into a case of an institutional architecture that appears as an institutional complex, in order to refine the operationalization of relevant concepts and measurement of key variables before formal models are constructed[14]. To reiterate, the dependent variable is the East Asian regime complex effectiveness. Patterns of synergistic or conflictive interaction within this complex will be an important part of the analysis. Biermann et.al.'s (2009:19) classification over the different degrees of fragmentation may serve as a starting point:

Table 1: Typology of Fragmentation of Governance Architectures.

	Synergistic	*Cooperative*	*Conflictive*
Institutional integration	One core institution, with other institutions being closely integrated	One core institution, with other institutions that are loosely integrated	Different, largely unrelated institutions
Norm conflict	Core norms of institutions are integrated	Core norms are not conflictive	Core norms conflict
Actor constellations	All relevant actors support the same institutions	Some actors remain outside main institutions, but maintain cooperation	Major actors support different institutions

Source: Biermann et.al (2009: 19)

East Asia comes across as a relevant case for a plausibility prose, because the institutional structure in this region is currently evolving, and as Ravenhill (2009:215) argued, it has been the world's most active region for intergovernmental cooperation during the last decade. The East Asian regional architecture is not chosen as a case because it is perceived as representative for other institutional complexes, but rather because it might provide a "laboratory" for studying emerging cooperative structures and patterns of interaction.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

Empirically this thesis relates to two levels of analysis. The first level represents the global governance arena where there is an ongoing debate about the institutional complex for global climate change mitigation. This level will be introduced already in the next chapter, in order

[14] Levy (2008: 6) argues that plausibility probes fall between the hypothesis generating methodological stage and the hypothesis testing stage. A methodological discussion on the functions of plausibility probes will follow in Chapter: 4.

to provide a contextual setting for the empirical analysis of the regional institutional complex in East Asia, which constitutes the key analytical level. The institutional complex on a regional level is more operational in character, and climate related efforts here are directed towards cooperating on ways to achieve goals, already set forth, rather than "finding solutions" to the global climate change problem.

The first section of this thesis will provide a foundation for the analysis that will be done in the second section. Chapter 2: "The governance debate", will introduce the general debate on institutional complexity within the issue of climate change governance. Chapter 3: "Theoretical and Analytical Approach" will seek to illuminate the theoretical roots of the different positions in the debate. In this regards, I will aspire to summarize the development of regime theory from the formative stages towards the relatively new branch of institutional interaction theory. Secondly, I will present the toolbox for analyzing institutional interaction within an institutional complex, in order to outline the analytical approach that is chosen for this study. In Chapter 4: "Methodological reflections", I will briefly discuss methodological issues pertaining to the research design, as well as discuss validity and reliability concerns in relation to collection of data. Chapter 5: "East Asia's governance architecture" will provide background information on the different institutions operating within the institutional complex in East Asia. By that, I will aspire to sketch an "institutional map" of the region.

The second section includes the analysis and the conclusion. The analysis will appear in Chapter 6: "Driving forces: interest, power and leadership" as well as Chapter 7: "East Asia's governance architecture and climate change". The empirical macro-question presented in previous section will be answered by this two-part analysis. Micro-questions will lead the two components of the analysis. The micro-question guiding chapter 6 is:

> *What characterizes the driving forces of interest, power and leadership, behind the institutional complex in East Asia?*

Chapter 7: "East Asia's governance architecture and climate change" will more specifically address the consequences of the institutional complexity in East Asia on the issue of climate change. The analysis will be led by what Stokke (2011: 144) calls "the micro question of effectiveness", namely:

How can each institution maximize its contribution to the overall governance system with the aim of mitigating or solving a problem of environmental governance?

To reduce the analytical complexity, I will in this chapter focus on the three most important multilateral institutions in the East Asian region, namely ASEAN, ASEAN Plus Three (APT), and the East Asia Summit (EAS).

After these two chapters of empirical analysis, the "Concluding discussion" in Chapter 8 will go back to theoretical discussion, and discuss potential implications of the findings as well as propose two hypotheses for further research.

2 The governance fragmentation debate

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a contextual setting for the analysis of the East Asian institutional complex for climate change cooperation. I will do so by introducing the ongoing debate in both academic and policy circles, over the fragmented character of cooperation on climate change mitigation efforts. This background chapter will start with a discussion of the features that make climate change a unique governance task, and continue with a deliberation over whether a building block approach do in fact fit the complex reality of climate change cooperation better. This deliberation will be based on a literature review over the different positions within the governance fragmentation debate, whereas the coming analysis will empirically analyze a building block approach to climate change governance in the East Asian regional setting. Four potential consequences of the building block approach will be briefly discussed, namely: speed, ambition, participation and forum shopping.

Institutional complexity within the climate change issue area is a matter of fact that is not necessarily undesirable. As Van Asselt (2005: 256) points to, the problem of climate change is interlinked both in cause and effect to most areas of human activity. Linked to so widely diverse areas such as energy, transport, land use and urban development, states' interests are going to be divergent. Consequentially, climate change governance has been fragmented from the start. This proposition is reflected in the empirical evidence: in 2007 there existed more than 900 multilateral environmental agreements (Mitchell 2007) and five major agreements has, for the two previous decades, been adopted annually (Oberthür 2003:1). International environmental governance is thus one of the most institutionally fragmented structures of international law and policy (Oberthür and Stokke 2011:5). Van Asselt (2005: 256) argue that when states' interests diverge to such an extent, fragmentation is likely, because specialized regimes are regarded as more in line with the various interests.

The positions within the governance debate can broadly be categorized into two camps: those advocating a top-down solution, and those arguing for a bottom-up (or a so-called building blocks approach)[15]. The proponents of a top-down solution start their argumentation from the *problem* of climate change, and argues that this is a classic problem of collective action,

[15] Within the first camp you find: Barret (2003, 2007), van Asselt (2005, 2007). The second camp includes authors such as: Victor (2006, 2011), Keohane and Victor (2010), van Verweij (2006).

because mitigating climate changes is a public good that provides states with incentives to free ride on other's efforts. This entails that if we do not manage to alter the actors' structure of incentives, then individual rationality will produce outcomes that are collectively suboptimal. To be able to disincentivize actors to free ride (i.e. alter the incentive structure), you need a certain extent of centralized control. If an external actor does not enforce compliance, then one actor will not trust that another actor will fulfill its promises, and commitments in general will lose legitimacy. Moreover, climate change is a global problem that calls for a global solution.

The other side generally accepts the proposition of climate change as a problem of a global public good, but questions the political feasibility of a top-down solution. David Victor (2006: 94) argues that the top-down approach to climate cooperation builds on a too optimistic perspective of states interests in international cooperation.[16] A central precondition for cooperation in general, is that there exists a shared understanding of the threats and opportunities that the relevant problem entails. Only in such a situation, can states center their attention on a common objective. The common objective of the international climate change efforts is spelled out in Article 2 of the UNFCCC: "to avoid dangerous anthropogenic interference in the climate system" (UNFCCC 2012). Victor (2006) convincingly presents the fundamental challenges to reaching this objective, the most obvious being that far from all countries have an immediate interest in cooperating to curb climate changes[17]. He claims that only in a scenario of extreme and abrupt changes will all countries have a strong interest in preventing them.

Furthermore, the advocates of a building blocks approach argue that although the problem is global, the emissions of greenhouse gases are a product of local activity. The problem can therefore be attacked from the other side, so to say. From this side, the reality looks more complex and less coherent. Verweij et.al (2006) argues that the Kyoto Protocol, as single-policy architecture, is not adept to the complex world it is supposed to govern. The only viable way of combating climate change in a state of anarchy, is according to these authors, a so-called "clumsy solution" that is adapted to widely different ways of perceiving the problem

16 Other authors that questions the political feasibility of a comprehensive climate change agreement are: Keohane and Victor (2010), Victor (2011), van Verweij (2006)

17 Victor (2006: 93) points to Russia as a country that will benefit to a certain extent of the coming climate changes because their agricultural sector will have improved conditions for production. Norway's opportunity for oil extraction in the polar region is another example.

of climate change. Solutions that are closer to states interests are more likely to be implemented, and not just adopted. Within clumsy solutions, there could be more focus on practical cooperation over for instance renewable energy or technology.[18] When it comes to institution building, they argue that clumsiness outperforms elegance.

In the following, I will briefly discuss how these two camps regard four potential consequences of the building blocks approach, namely: speed, ambition, participation and forum shopping.

2.1 Speed

The current system of climate diplomacy is a time demanding process. Scholars that have argued for fragmented structures have pointed to the urgency of the problem and the fact that the climate changes will not wait for an integrated international agreement. The necessity of concrete action today is pressing. Agreements that only encompass a limited number of participants may be faster to negotiate and will therefore enter in to force at an earlier point of time. A fragmented governance structure could, in that way, produce a higher output of climate change policies. Countries could choose the strategies that were perceived as compatible with their national interests, and would therefore be less demanding (Biermann et.al 2009:25).

Biermann et.al (ibid.) argue, however, that quicker is not necessarily better. They are concerned that different initiatives will run counter towards each other, and there is also no guarantee that solutions with few participants will expand on a later point to include more states. Instant problem solving might also provide disincentives for third countries to engage in climate cooperation. A hasted negotiated agreement might furthermore not pay adequate attention to structural features that would prepare the regime for future challenges. In other

[18] Verweij et.al. (2006: 833-834) argue that the Protocol does not recognize the potential that lies in the fact that production costs of renewable sources has fallen dramatically during the last years. They show how wind power is now six times more efficient than it was in 1980. Water has become reliable and unexpressive as source of energy. US Energy Department has projected geothermal energy to be cheaper than fossil fuels within the next decade. Solar energy is also emerging as an affordable solution. Photovoltaic also make solar energy a good solution in poor areas, because you do not need to construct electricity grids to distribute electricity. Solar energy is a long way from being competitive, but the last decade's developments suggest that may become feasible in the future.

words, robustness might be sacrificed. Furthermore, they warn that instant problem solving might provide disincentives for states to commit to long-term climate action.

2.2 Ambition

By reducing the scope of participants, proponents of fragmented structures predict that it would be possible to achieve a "narrow-but-deep" structure of cooperation. (Biermann et.al. 2009:26). With wide-ranging participation, scholars have shown the tendency towards shallow commitments, as described by the LLAP (Underdal 1980). The substantial output of fewer participants could thus be more progressive than when more actors must commit to one program. Biermann et.al (2009:26) also emphasizes that smaller arrangements like bilateral cooperation will better facilitate for side-payments than larger arrangements would, and by that negotiations would less likely end in a state of stalemate. Fragmentations of governance can also facilitate for policy innovation and diffusion of successful practices. Alternative climate regulatory frameworks could be tested out, and the more successful practices "survive" and may be adopted by other actors.

Biermann et.al. (2009:27) are skeptical to arguments on higher ambition in a fragmented structure, as they fear that ad hoc arrangements might decrease long term ambitions because there is no overall institutional coherent structure. From an economic point of view they also argue that streamlining is more cost-efficient approach to building policy architecture. Aldy, Barrett and Stavins (cited in Biermann et.al 2009:28) found that "since marginal emissions control costs increase steeply, a broad-but-shallow policy would result in lower overall costs." They further find that emission trading is most cost-efficient and effective on a global scale. A formal linkage of regional emission trading systems would from an economic perspective therefore only provide a second best alternative. On a general account, Victor (January 2012) recognizes, in a video seminar, the advantage of cost efficiency in relation to institutional integration, but argues that an option that is not politically feasible cannot be considered as a best solution regardless of theoretical accounts.

2.3 Participation

Participation of a wider array of actors might increase in a fragmented governance structure, because entry cost for participation is thought to be lower. In a loose regime complex there is often more room for public-private partnerships, and non-state actors might be allowed more influence in decision-making. This could lead to a situation where more actors and sectors of human activity are committed to climate policies from different angles and perspectives.

2.4 Forum shopping

This is one of the most controversial points within the debate. The term forum shopping stems from the legal literature, and refers to "the strategic selection of favorable venues from a menu of alternative governance arrangements, but also withdrawal from old and creation of new arrangements" (Papa 2008:1). When the supply of institutions is great, forum shopping is a potential consequence, because states are provided with incentives for strategically choosing which institution they should relate to.

Although many scholars have interpreted this in negative terms, it may also be interpreted as a positive consequence[19]. One important positive aspect is that when states choose a forum out of a spectrum of existing forums, than they will consequentially have a stronger interest in complying with the decisions within the chosen venue, because this regime is more aligned with their given preferences. As Hafner (2004:859) states: "tailored laws are worth following". A possible critique to this perspective could be that state behavior should ideally adjust to law and not the other way around. However, Abbott et.al (2000:419) has convincingly argued, states do not only comply with international agreements because they are required to do so by international law. In fact, political factors weigh heavier when states decide to comply with an agreement or not. The authors paraphrase Clausewitz in saying: "law is the continuation of political intercourse with the addition of other means".[20] Fragmented governance structures will give more room to regional solutions, which again will more likely be in coherence with political context that the institutions operate in. Increased state control over institutions may also lead to efficiency gains.[21] State control

[19] For an optimistic perspective see: Hafner (2004). For a pessimistic view see: Papa (2008), Benvenisti and Downs (2007), Drezner (2010)

[20] See Abbott and Snidal (2000) for a more thorough discussion on this.

[21] See Cogan (2008) for this perspective in a discussion of forum shopping in international law.

increase because the relationship between actors and institutions becomes comparable to a market situation where supply exceeds demand. Each institution is then forced to compete against each other, and within a pluralist setting, one institution potentially seeks to "outperform" the other. Another positive interpretation is that the wide supply of institutions may be interpreted as an increasing specialization from different regimes, and forum shopping may simply mean that states seek to find other states that are most capable of solving a given problem at a given point of time. However, perhaps the most important potential positive consequence, may be that chances of a standstill in policy output on a given governance task, will be significantly reduced when states are allowed to apply a flexible strategy towards choosing forums. If problematic relations between two countries hamper one regime, then actors may simply shift their focus towards another forum (Cha 2011:112).

Scholars who are skeptic towards fragmentation often point to forum shopping as a negative consequence of these types of structures. One of most central concern is that forum shopping may facilitate for opportunistic behavior on states behalf, and may serve to undermine international law[22]. Enforcement of compliance becomes a problem because an actor that is punished for deviant behavior may simply shift forum. When compliance is not enforced, a central question becomes: how can states' commitments be deemed credible, when an external party will not hold them accountable for their behavior?[23] Furthermore, many authors perceive it as a tool for the powerful.[24] Drezner (2010:2) argues that: "proliferation of regimes shifts global governance from rule-based outcomes to power-based outcomes". Benvenisti and Downs (2007:1) claim that forum shopping "represents an ongoing effort on the part of powerful states to preserve their dominance in an era in which hierarchy is increasingly viewed as illegitimate, and to reduce their accountability both domestically and internationally." By exploiting the opportunities a fragmented structure presents, the authors argue that powerful actors attain control because within more narrow, functional arrangements, weaker states have limited scope to build cross-issue coalitions and increase their bargaining power. According to these authors (ibid.), it is in the powerful actor's interest to shift forums frequently, because by "obscuring the role of intentionality, fragmentation frees powerful states from having to assume responsibility for the shortcomings of a global legal system that they themselves have played a preponderant role in creating". If this

[22] See: Drezner (2010)
[23] See Abbott and Snidal (2000) for a more thorough discussion on this.
[24] See: Zelli et.al (2010), Benvenisti and Downs (2007),

argument is analyzed under the banner of equity, this appears as a problematic aspect. However, within conventional regime theory, it is assumed that solutions that support the interest of powerful actors are more effective because collective action depends on effective leadership by an actor that is willing to presume responsibility for the provision of collective goods.[25] The other side of the coin is that a governance system that is not perceived as fair may reduce overall effectiveness, because countries do not consider decisions as legitimate.

To sum up, this chapter has sought to present an overview of the literature that makes out the different positions within the governance fragmentation debate. However, the deadlock of the UNFCCC process has ignited so much scholarly attention towards the issue of climate change governance, that an exhaustive presentation of the relevant literature exceeds the ambition of this brief outline. Instead, I have aspired to identify the most influential contributions and, by that, sketch the contours of the debate. The most important delineation can be drawn between those that see low fragmentation as a positive starting point for climate change governance, and those that evaluate fragmentation in general as a potentially harmful feature in governance structures. In the following, I will argue that these different positions most often stem from different theoretical perspectives on the potential for effective cooperation. With a clarification of the theoretical evolution of regime theory, we will hopefully gain an improved insight into the arguments presented above.

[25] A more thorough discussion of the rationalist perspective will follow in Chapter 3: ”Theoretical and Analytical approach”.

3 Theoretical and analytical approach

The theoretical foundation for evaluating climate change governance is currently evolving, and this chapter seeks to explore the most central perspectives. In doing so, I seek to clarify the coherence of the established and the emerging strands of regime theory. This chapter is interlinked with the previous because the different positions within the governance fragmentation debate may be located in different positions within the overarching label of regime theory. After an overview of the evolution of regime theory is presented, an analytical approach will be laid out. This analytical approach spells out the hypothesized causal relationship, and should by that enable me to identify the potential for regime complex effectiveness. However, it is important to note that the empirical analysis that will follow later in the thesis, will not be an empirically test of this causal relationship, but rather seeks to serve as evidence for or against the plausibility of the theoretically deducted concepts and mechanisms that interaction theory puts forth.

The most important components of the analytical approach are: the driving forces behind the institutional complex, and the intervening variable of the regime complex. The driving forces can also be interpreted as the frames for collective action, or the preconditions for effective cooperation. The most commonly applied factors are: interests, power and leadership. The intervening variable of a regime complex is a wide notion, and we need an understanding of the different aspects of this concept. The first step will therefore be to present a framework that enables an analysis of the degrees of fragmentation in the East Asian setting. Going further, Stokke's (2011) framework for pathways to effective governance within a regime complex enables an analysis of the potential for effective governance in East Asia. In the following, I will argue that an analytical approach that is inclusive and comprehensive, such as this one, has a comparative advantage in a setting of institutional complexity compared with a single-regime analysis.

As the quote above indicates, profound knowledge on elementary building blocks does not necessarily enable a comprehensive understanding of an overarching phenomenon. Collective action theory has shown in which situations states need to cooperate, while the study of regime effectiveness has displayed ways that a given institution can facilitate for effective

cooperation.[26] The focus within conventional regime theory rests on problem solving capacity of a single regime. However, if the elementary components an author is set to study affect each other in a significant way, then studying the components in isolation would imply that an important dimension is left out. Research on institutional interaction seeks to improve on this problematic aspect of the regime effectiveness literature. This emergent theoretical strand builds on collective action theory, but also seeks to challenge some of its assumptions. The main challenge concerns the assumption that power, interest and ideas maps directly onto institutional choices. Institutional interaction theory rather assumes that different institutions also affect them. "At a minimum, institutional interaction, in addition to exogenous interests, thus significantly affect and shape actors preferences. Preference formation cannot therefore be easily separated from institutional analysis" (Oberthür and Gehring 2011:47). This thesis seeks to use collective action theory as a starting point to explore the exogenous preferences of the relevant actors, and continue with an institutional analysis to explore how these two dimensions both affect the outcome in a given case of an institutional complex. By that, the strategy follows Oberthür and Gehring's (2011:48) advice to use collective action theory as a "first-cut", but seek to develop it further to adapt to the existing reality of institutional interaction.

The traditional schools in international relations theory have different views on the potential for effective cooperation on the international stage. I will not go further here, than to argue that both the neo-realist and the neo-liberalist perspective share the rationalist foundation that postulates that actors are utility maximizing agents who seek cooperation for individual gains. Neo-realists claim that actors seek cooperation when they are exposed to an external threat, while neo-liberalists argue that actors will seek to cooperate in order to achieve common objectives.[27] The neo-realists emphasize that power relations determine state choices, and generally present a more "pessimistic" perspective of the problem-solving potential of international institutions. This thesis will depart from the neo-liberalist notion that absolute gains are in principle achievable through joint efforts, but will incorporate the realist perspective by paying attention to power relations that are recognized as the framework for collective action.

[26] Regime theory will in this thesis be understood as a generic term that includes all facets of the question of collective action.

[27] See: Mearsheimer (1994) for a neo-realist approach, and Ikenberry (1992) for a neo-liberalist.

3.1 Point of departure: Do regimes matter?

The first debate regarding international cooperation can be said to have created the conceptual foundation of regime theory. The study of governance architecture today is based in this extensive field of study. Regimes have been studied under a wide range of theoretical camps that differ also on epistemological and ontological questions, but the mainstream version is based on the rationalist assumptions of actor preferences (Gale 1996:256). The mainstream version of regime theory developed out of a neo-functionalist starting point. Gale (1996:259) claims that the early, important contributions of Keohane (1982), Keohane and Nye (1972), Haas (1964), Young (1989) and Ruggie (1982), all built on the same line of reasoning over the role of institutions. They agreed that international behavior was, to a greater or lesser extent, institutionalized (Gale 1996:259). Even the ones who saw conflict as the general rule of international relations contended that: "[…] if so, institutionalized patterns of cooperation are particularly in need of explanation" (Keohane 1982:325).

Integration processes where seen as dynamic, and Haas (1964) famously described the effect of institutional spillover, and influence of bureaucracies at the supranational level. The problem with the early theories of integration was that they saw international governance as exclusively connected to international organizations. By the 1970's this became a theoretical concern due to the observation that international organizations at that time were performing badly, but international cooperation was on the rise (Gale 1996: 254). This gave birth to the concept of regimes.

Ruggie (1975, referred in Gale 1998: 252) was the first to propose a definition of regimes, and defined them as: "a set of mutual expectations, rules and regulations, plans, organizational energies and financial commitments, which have been accepted by a group of states". Krasner (1981) later presented a definition that would become the research consensus: "principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given issue area" (Krasner 1983:1). Gale (1998:253) claims that this line of regime theory was anchored in a problem-solving theoretical framework, as regimes where seen as intervening variables between causal factors and outcomes. The causal factors of relevance where: power, interests and values, while the outcomes where given behavioral changes. One of the most important questions was in what way regimes raise the probability of international cooperation. Keohane (1982) argued that regimes facilitate for international cooperation by

reducing transaction costs, generating stable expectations of reciprocity, and providing the parties with information. Mitchell (1994:425) argued that regime design matters, and qualified regime success to whether they affect behavioral outcomes or not. Realists like Morgenthau (referred in Mitchell 1994:426) held that "treaty rules correlate, but do not cause compliance" as an answer to the question of why international law is observed to such a great extent. However, if compliance is an outcome of power relations, and regimes have no causal effect, an explanation of regime change in a stable structural environment becomes problematic.

In 2003, Young declared that regimes do matter, and that this was now a consensus. The way in which they matter is therefore more interesting. The issue of collective goods attracted consequently more attention from scholars of regime theory[28]. In what way do individuals promote their interests as a group? Can collective rationality be attained, and if so, how do regimes contribute?

3.2 Moving forward: How do they matter?

Mancur Olson (1971) made a pioneering argument about the logical fallacy of the intuitive assumption that self-seeking individuals in a group of other like-minded individuals will together pursue their common interest. He showed that, in all but small groups, rational individuals acting together would not attain what was in their collective interest, unless there was coercion or external incentives involved in the process. His two most important arguments to challenge the assumption of collective rationality are that; firstly, when group-size increases, incentives for individual contribution diminishes as returns of collective action will lessen. Secondly, the public goods provided by collective actions are non-excludable, meaning that they are, in nature, prone to free-riding. Schelling (1978) introduced the divide between "micromotives and macrobehavior" to describe the essence of the collective action problem. Non-excludable goods range from being rivalrous to being non-rival. A rivalrous good is one where the consumption of a good by one individual, prevents another individual from consuming that good at the same time. It is generally assumed that the more non-rival a non-excludable good is, the more problematic it is to provide (Hess, Ostrom 2006). Climate change is such a public good.

[28] Snidal (1994) conceptualized the different sorts of goods the sorts of "goods" (private, public, common pool and club).

The free-rider problem is also evident regarding the use of common pool resources. These common goods are non-excludable, but more rivalrous in character, and the problem thus manifests itself in a different form. Hardin (1968) showed that the logical result of collective action regarding such common goods was a depletion of shared resources because benefits are generally concentrated while costs are highly dispersed. He claimed that coercion and/or regulation by a state or private actor therefore was necessary to secure sustainable use of such resources. Ostrom (1990) challenged that assumption by claiming that if there is sufficient amount of communication, information and trust in a system of resource management, individuals can come together and govern resource utilization in an effective manner. On this basis, she developed eight design principles for successful governance of shared resources, and sought to apply them to the international level. Young (2002) and Underdal (2010) challenged the generalizability of these ideals of institutional design. Problem-solving capacity does not only pertain to the way the governing institution is designed, but also how well it relates to the specific problem at hand. A common analogy is the one of institutional diagnosis, where the problem is identified, diagnosis is set, and an institutional cure is proposed. The question of regime success thus demands two answers: one concerning the structure of the problem, and the other the institutional response (Underdal 2010:3).

Although climate change can, as previously discussed, be categorized, as a public good, but the battle against it cannot be won without a sustainable use of resources. The dilemma of public goods and common pool resources are thus clearly interlinked, and questions relating to institutional capacity and climate change should therefore account for both. The two social dilemmas also have the same predicted outcome according to game-theoretical models: Nash-equilibrium and no cooperation (Poteete and Ostrom 2010:144).

3.3 An emerging theory of institutional interaction

Up till now, regime theory has most often had a narrow focus on the effect of specific regimes. As this strand developed in conceptual clarity and explanatory power, researchers started advancing towards seeking to understand the more complex phenomenon of how the interaction of multiple regimes affects how well problems are solved.

The research project named "Institutional Dimension of Global Environmental Change" (IDGEC) started analyzing institutional interaction in the late nineties (Oberthür and Gehring 2011:25). One concern that fueled the theoretical work was the observations of "treaty congestion" and "regime density" on the global arena for environmental governance. Focus remained on regime effectiveness, but it was recognized that one regime does not evolve on a "blank slate". The effectiveness of one regime does not only depend on individual features of one regime (as was previously assumed), but is contingent on its interaction with other institutions. In that sense, the focus is on broader consequences of regime effectiveness, but it transcends the focus on individual institutions." (Oberthür and Gehring 2011:25) Climate governance is necessarily multi-institutional in its nature because it relates to many dimensions of human activity so in this issue area, this research agenda may prove particularly rewarding. Oberthür and Gehring (2011:28) recognize that this study of institutional interaction is in the preliminary phase and state that "There is substantial scope for further interplay analysis. None have so far provided a comprehensive picture of the problems and promises of interaction."

3.4 Analytical approach

The analysis of effectiveness on the regime complex in East Asia in meeting the challenge of climate change will advance by two stages. The first step is grounded in the propositions advanced by mainstream regime theory, namely that institutional capacity must match the structure of the problem at hand. By analyzing the interest configuration and power distribution over this configuration, as well as the interaction patterns, the institutional "cure" can be identified. Provision of leadership is also thought to be a central precondition for effective cooperation. The next step is based within institutional interaction theory, and departs from the argument that some internal coherence within a fragmented structure is necessary for the institutions to interact in a synergistic manner, and thus contribute to effective governance. Firstly, I will introduce Biermann et.al.'s (2009) framework for categorizing the different degrees of fragmentation within governance architectures, and secondly, I present Stokke's (2011) framework for analyzing potential pathways to effective governance within fragmented structures. These two frameworks will guide the analysis in chapter 7. However, before I present this analytical approach, some conceptual and analytical clarifications are necessary.

In order to get a clear understanding of institutional complexes, it could prove rewarding to take one step back. What type of institutions does in fact interact? Two types of arrangements are classified as international institutions. Following Keohane's (1989:3, quoted in Oberthür and Stokke 2011:2) definition, institutions are "persistent and connected set of rules and practices that prescribe behavioral roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations". Young (2002: 5) defines them less stringently as: "systems of rules, decision-making procedures, and programs that give rise to social practices, assign roles to the participants in these practices, and guide interactions among the occupants of relevant roles". The governance literature separates between "negotiated" arrangements and "spontaneous" arrangements (Young 1986: 111). The former relates to deliberate state choices and the latter to institutions that emerge from practice and interaction among actors, as e.g. customary international law. While the latter is also an important part of international governance, analyses that keep to the political domain normally focus on the former (Oberthür and Stokke 2011:2). This thesis will follow that road.

Both international organizations and international regimes form part of the negotiated arrangements as described above. Oberthür and Stokke (ibid.) claim that a sharp distinction between the two is not fruitful, and that regimes can be seen as "the subset of institutions that involve states and concern behavior within specific issue areas" (Levy, Young and Zürn 1995, quoted by Oberthür and Stokke 2011:2). In some cases international organizations also govern specific issue areas, but they still carry the distinctive features of actor characteristics, such as a formal secretariat that is usually equipped with a legal personality. In that way international organizations may be seen as a "possible, but not a necessary part of the procedural components of an international regime" (ibid). Although some parts of the literature on governance applies a strict distinction between organizations and regimes[29] this thesis will follow the logic described above, and study how both types of institutions interaction on the climate governance field.

Some clarifications over research choices are also needed. Although the independent variable has been expanded to include a regime complex instead of a single regime, the explanandum remains institutional effectiveness in terms of contribution to solving a problem that the given

[29] See Biermann and Siebenhüner (2007), Young (2008) as advised by Oberthür and Stokke (2011:3).

institutions where set up to control[30]. This might have consequences for which level of governance we can measure effectiveness. Underdal (2004, 2008) has presented three levels that international institutions perform governance tasks on. The three categories are: output, outcome and impact. Output relates to a regime's production of norms, rules and regulations. The second stage is the behavioral change that may be observed after such output has been produced. The last stage of impact is when the state of the environment relevant to the governing task, changes (Underdal 2008). As the crucial independent variable now is a regime complex, effectiveness can hardly be assessed directly in terms of problem-solving capacity. We are certainly interested in the effect of institutional interaction and the given institutions contribution to problem solving, but it would be challenging to measure the direct effect of institutional interaction on behavioral outcome. We therefore seem obliged to limit the analysis to the level of output.

Next question of research strategy is what metric is relevant to use for an assessment of an institutional complex contribution to problem-solving? The degree of coherence within the fragmented structure will function as the metric, because internal coherence is thought to breed synergistic interaction between the various institutions within the complex, whereas strong fragmentation often breeds conflictive interaction. Between these two categories, Biermann et.al (2009) placed cooperative interaction as a middle category. Coherence and fragmentation may thus be presented as a continuum ranging from synergistic, cooperative and conflictive interaction.

3.4.1 The structural preconditions for effective governance

Problem-solving capacity is linked to problem type. This is why the traditional starting point of regime analysis is to explore the power distribution over interest constellation in a given situation to determining the problem structure. This is one of the most central preconditions for effective cooperation. The purpose of exploring the constellation of interest is to analyze whether it is subsumed to mechanisms that create a configuration that is either malignant or benign. A perfectly benign constellation is one where the preferences are perfectly aligned. When moving further away from this state of harmony, the problem becomes increasingly

[30] See Underdal's (2002: 4) definition of regime effectiveness: "(…) a regime can be considered effective to the extent that it successfully performs a certain (set of) function(s) or solves the problem(s) that motivated its establishment".

malignant (Underdal 2002:15). Underdal (2002:14) argues that the appropriate problem-solving skills and institutional tools depend on whether the problem at hand is considered as benign or malign. The more malign a problem is, the more "political" (i.e. higher levels of cooperation and more attention towards procedures for monitoring and enforcing compliance) the solution tends to be, inter alia.

The given configuration does not predicate the governance effectiveness in a given issue area, but multiple scholars have shown that a malignant configuration affects effectiveness in a significant and negative way[31]. Thus the probability of successful cooperation is lower when dealing with a malign problem.

Multiple authors have convincingly shown the inherent difficulties in cooperating to mitigate climate changes (Miles et.al 2002, Victor 2006, 2011). In fact, climate change appears to embody *all* the features of a malign problem. As a classic public goods problem, it is firstly associated with *externalities*, meaning that the rational calculus deviates from the common good and collective outcome will normally be suboptimal, thus creating *incongruity*. When the externalities are unevenly distributed, you will have an *asymmetrical distribution* and the difficulties of cooperation increases. With climate change, the time lags between the costs of given policy measures and the associated benefits of environmental effects are so long, so that costs and benefits may not even be shared by one generation. This means that future generation will in principle be free riding on the effort put in by previous generation. However, one can also regard this from a reverse perspective, and say that current generation is free riding on future generations' opportunities to exploit natural resources. Nonetheless, the general point remains that mitigation efforts may benefit free riders while punishing contributors to collective goods (Underdal 2002:19). This asymmetrical distribution of costs and benefits adds to the malignancy of the problem. The fact that the associated benefits are not even fully understood does little to ameliorate the problem. In fact, Miles et.al (2002:445) found that the effect of malignancy was contingent on the degree of *uncertainty* related to the problem, meaning that a well-understood problem might be governed effectively despite the malignant configuration. As climate change is a highly complex system that we still do not understand fully, the prospects are not encouraging. Climate change is furthermore a product of economic activity that is subsumed to stark *competition* on the international level so that a

[31] See statistical findings by different scholars in Miles et.al (2002).

unilateral cooperative move is a risky endeavor. The literature then predicts that this will lead to a configuration of interests that is very malignant. The only ameliorating feature present seems to be that climate change is certainly a multidimensional problem, but instead of cumulative cleavages, the different dimensions causing climate changes, instead represents *cross-cutting cleavages* so that compromises and package deals may potentially be found. The sum of this amounts to a pessimistic outlook on the prospects for cooperation on climate change mitigation.

Power enters the equation by exacerbating or weakening the interest constellation and therefore acts to either enhance or lower the potential for effective cooperation. On a general account, evidence is found to support the inference that if power is concentrated in the hands of actors that can be characterized as pushers the likelihood of effective cooperation is better than if the power is located in the hands of laggards (see Underdal 2002:461). However, this effect is not necessarily the same with both malign and benign problems. The last precondition that will be analyzed is the provision of leadership in the East Asian setting. Miles et.al (2002) found support for the hypothesis that instrumental leadership tends to facilitate for regime formation and implementation. When a problem is characterized as malignant, the need for leadership increases, but this is also when it is most difficult to provide. Interviews with key stakeholders in the policy process in China and Singapore should illuminate the question that pertains to leadership in an interesting way.

Sources of power can be measured in general capabilities as well as according to issue specific power. Environmental economists often use a given country's vulnerability to climate change as well as the cost of mitigating emissions (Victor 2006). Political scientists usually point to the political feasibility of mitigation efforts as well[32], and a case can be made for including the dimension on whether countries wish to cooperate or not as well. This seems appropriate in the East Asian setting because it is generally assumed that countries in the region are skeptical towards delegating authority to third parties[33]. In analyzing the interests of the different countries, I use vulnerability for climate change, political feasibility of mitigation as well as countries willingness to engage in intergovernmental cooperation as factors. Interdependence is thought to strengthen or lessen existing power relations (Keohane

[32] See Victor (2006) Underdal (1992)

[33] See Acharya (2004)

and Nye 1989). A key dimension related to power within governance structures, is therefore, whether powerful actors prefer reform or status quo.

Leadership is a crucial factor for establishing and maintaining effective international cooperation. One actor or a coalition of actor's should ideally be willing to secure the provision of collective goods. Underdal (1994) conceptualized leadership in two categories. The first is unilateral leadership, where one actor "sets the pace for others", while the second category is instrumental leadership and refers to situations where one actor finds solutions for others (Underdal 1994: 183). Provision of common goods can be provided through both, and so in the coming analysis, I will focus on the different actors' willingness to provide such contributions to collective problems.

In summing up the analytical approach to driving forces in an institutional complex, a precautionary mark is called for. A sound analysis of interest configuration should perform a proper market analysis instead of painting with broad strokes, as this thesis inevitably will do. However, these findings are meant to provide an overview over the interests, power and leadership dimension that operate in East Asia, rather than say something specific about a narrow relation. By this, I rather aspire to see the grand image. It should be noted however, that what you can say on this level of abstraction is likely to be limited.

3.4.2 Potential for effective governance

As the background variables now have been introduced, it seems appropriate to move on to the intermediate independent variable, namely the institutional complex. As already mentioned, the metric for evaluating whether the complex contributes to problem solving, will be whether the relevant institutions interact in a synergistic or conflictive manner. This is a common approach to assess patterns of institutional interaction[34]. So far conflictive situations have been in focus, but it is also relevant to evaluate synergistic relationship to analyze the possibilities to grasp further synergic opportunities. When synergies exist, one institution may be strengthened by influence from the other, and opposite, when conflicts exist and the effect is disruptive, then one institution may be adversely affected by another. Oberthür and Gehring (2011:50-51) claim that the focus of institutional interaction has so far been on regime

[34] Keohane, Haas and Levy 1993, Gehring and Oberthür 2006

congestion and conflicts, and they argue that therefore the major rationale of the current discussions on reforming environmental governance has called for coordination and integration. However, their findings indicate that: "synergies are at least as common as regime conflicts" (ibid). Different institutions that partly overlap one another, may be guided by a clear division of labor, and may thus complement each other in an effective way. In a situation like this, integration might mean that you miss out on potential synergistic relationships. In the following, I will discuss how we may study in what way institutions may complement each other.

3.4.3 Pathways to effective governance

Stokke (2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2011) has conducted extensive research on the narrower subject of which pathways that is thought to contribute to effective governance within institutional complexes. Three pathways are presented. The first is labeled "ideational interaction" and relates to a process of learning where one institution learns from another by emulating institutional design. The second is called "normative interaction" and refers to a situation where "the substantive or operational norm of one regime either contradicts or validates the other" (Gehring and Oberthür 2010:36). Utilitarian interaction "alters the cost and benefits of options available for another" (ibid.). Actors may manage such interaction patterns by manipulate one of these mechanisms to attain an effective outcome. If they attend to institutional interaction deliberately, such behavior is labeled interplay management.

These pathways and ideal types are deductively derived so they cannot be proved to be right or wrong. They may rather serve to guide analysis, in a similar way as game theory, by reflecting relevant components of the different causal pathways that a case of interaction may follow (Gehring and Oberthür 2011:42)

Stokke (2011) has provided an exemplary review of how institutions can interact synergistically in regional governance architecture. In his work on the institutional architecture in the Arctic, he discusses what governance should aim for. He presents different governance niches that institutions might choose to maximize their contribution to the overall architecture. Effective niche selection thus remains a critical component to interplay management (i.e. the deliberate manipulation of institutional interaction effects). Stokke (2011:147) argues that to identify the conditions for effective niche selection, a researcher

should explore the factors that are capable of providing supportive impact on different governance tasks by triggering the different mechanisms for effective interaction (as presented earlier), namely: cognitional, normative and utilitarian interplay. *Knowledge building* is the first niche presented by Stokke (2011:147). An institution aiming for knowledge building may provide credibility, legitimacy and salience to the scientific input to decision-making on the given problem. Credibility then refers to cognitional interplay because the actors perceive the information as the best available knowledge. Legitimacy triggers normative interaction because actors perceive their own concerns and values are integrated into the output. The salience of knowledge building may contribute to problem solving by triggering utilitarian interplay because knowledge is directly relevant to the actors. A second niche Stokke (2011:148) is *norm building*. Norms have the potential to contribute to problem-solving if they are applicable, meaning that they are coherent with other already established norms and may thus trigger cognitional interplay, if it entails coverage, meaning that the most important actors are involved and normative interplay is supported, and if the norm has substantive strength, meaning that the norms effect on behavior is not dismissible and the utility of interplay is therefore advanced. A third niche relates to *capacity building*. The transfer of technology and resources are the most important aspects of this niche because it may remove the impediments for norm adherence (Stokke 2011:150). The three triggers that are listed here are models, commitments and funds. Capacity building institutions may build models that may be diffused, and cognitional interplay may occur because other institutions learn from the first. Commitments relate to situations where institutions show a normative commitment to provide assistance to others by sharing their practices. The last factor for effective capacity building is the transfer of funds. This factor may trigger utilitarian interplay because when members of one institution decide to provide funds for members in another, then that may restructure the incentives for the actors in the target institution. The last niche that Stokke (2011:149) presents is one of *rule enforcement*. The three factors of rule enforcement that triggers different mechanisms are: verification, review and punishment. The most important feature of this niche is that it may deter parties from not complying by adding costs to such noncompliance. In support of cognitional interplay, an institution may provide the parties with a verification of compliance related information. An institution's ability to review such factual information up against the commitments made, and then provide a judgment on parties' compliance, may contribute to normative interplay. The last factor that

may contribute to supportive interplay by triggering utilitarian interplay is punishment. If actors are willing to punish non-compliance then the incentives to free ride will be smaller.
The table below summarizes the categories created by Stokke (2011:151) that will be used in the analysis of the institutional architecture in East Asia.

Table 2. Pathways to synergistic institutional interaction

Type of interplay	**Governance niches**			
	Knowledge building	**Norm building**	**Capacity building**	**Enforcement**
Cognitional	Credibility	Applicability	Model	Verification
Normative	Legitimacy	Coverage	Commitment	Review
Utilitarian	Salience	Strength	Funds	Punishment

Source: Stokke's (2011: 151) overview over "effective niche selection: Conditions favoring supportive institutional interplay".

By applying very specific categories for effective institutional interaction, then hopefully, the analysis will be able to say something more specific about the effect of interaction. However, there is still no guarantee that even perfectly synergistic interaction between institutions will ensure that the environmental problem will be solved. Institutional capacity and institutional interaction may at best function as necessary conditions, and certainly not as sufficient conditions.

To sum up the analytical approach, it starts from the rationalist, actor-centered approach, and is followed by an institutional analysis of the features and potential effects of an institutional complex. A brief notion of warning should be included in regards to the integrationist approach. By choosing a strategy of analyzing the institutional complex in East Asia rather than a specific regime, or even a decomposed dyadic institutional relationship, conceptual broadness may come at the expense of theoretical and analytical depth. Mechanisms may be harder to discover when a case is not sufficiently isolated. Although there is a clear ambition in this thesis to contribute to theoretical development, the case of East Asia is interesting to analyze as a case of an institutional complex because institutional arrangements are currently emerging, and this unsettled structure does not invite for a decomposed approach. Institutional arrangements arise and end by the moment, so the institutional complex is therefore of more

interest. The conceptual development for concepts relating to interplay management of institutional complexes is moreover in a nascent stage, so testing concepts on empirical data also seems relevant at this stage. Hopefully, the East Asian case will help shed light on whether institutional interaction and interplay management affects the potential for effective governance of the climate change issues areas. Concerns related to methodological choices will follow in the next chapter.

4 Methodological reflections

George and Bennett (2001:19) claim: "case studies are generally strong where statistical methods and formal models are weak". This thesis will seek to capitalize on that strength. In the following section, I will present the case-study research design used in this thesis, as well as the theoretical level of ambition related to the possibility of making valid inferences. I will proceed to evaluate possible threats to the research design's validity, before I discuss reliability concerns related to data collection, from both document analysis and elite interviews.

4.1 Qualitative case study

Case studies are strong methodological instruments for evaluating conceptual validity, deriving new hypotheses, exploring causal mechanisms and modeling and assessing complex causal relationships (George and Bennett 2001:19-22). Related to conceptual validity, the strength lies primarily in the possibilities of exploring the functioning of different aspects of a given concept. Oberthür and Stokke (2011) argue that we need to advance our understanding of institutional complexes. By investigating the different aspects of the East Asian institutional complex, this thesis will hopefully contribute in that direction. The first section of the analysis in this thesis is based on a conventional approach for regime theory to study the preconditions for effective cooperation. In this section the analysis is structured and strictly deductive, but the other part of the analysis is more inductive, given that these are the concepts that the thesis seeks to contribute to developing.

Case studies may derive new hypotheses by identifying variables through explorative methods. Interviews with elite informants may provide new knowledge that may give rise to new hypotheses for further research. Causal mechanisms may also be explored by applying the case study method. This study will seek to explore the causal mechanisms operating in the institutional complex of the East Asian region, to evaluate the potential for effective cooperation in this setting. Because the case in this research study is an institutional complex, the conceptual focus is broad. This may come at the expense of theoretical and analytical depth, as Oberthür and Gehring (2011: 46) warns. On the other hand, the way institutional complexes affect regime effectiveness is necessarily through complex causal relationships.

There are efforts currently being undertaken to model these relationships formally, but case studies may be used to support such efforts. For the moment, factors may function better as labels than independent variables, given that there is currently no agreed definition of institutional complexes and we do not fully understand these complex processes today[35]. In sum, this thesis applies a research strategy that is common for studying institutional interaction, "structured as intensive, loosely comparative case studies that embrace a process-sensitive 'mechanism approach' to the formulation and substantiation of causal claims" (Hedström and Swedberg, 1998 in Stokke 2001: 9).

Although, as Lijphart (1971:691) famously stated, "science is a generalizing activity", it is not the frequency of particular outcomes that is generally in focus when a scholar applies the case study design, but rather the conditions that given outcomes tend to operate under, and the mechanisms they proceed through (George and Bennett 2001:31). This thesis focuses on the conditions that effective cooperation on climate change tends to operate under, and the mechanisms that this influence is guided by. Given that there are only a limited amount of cases of institutional complexes, the frequencies in which these complexes contribute to effective problem-solving is perhaps not as relevant as under which conditions they do in fact contribute.

4.2 Theoretical level of ambition and validity concerns

Andersen (1997) presents five theoretical levels of ambition related to case studies. From lowest to highest level of ambition, he ranks: A-theoretical studies, theoretical interpretive, conceptual development, generation of hypotheses, and testing of hypotheses. Given that this thesis do not have the analytical rigor necessary to test hypotheses derived from the literature, this thesis will be limited to the level of potentially generation new hypotheses, and thus not seek to refute or challenge causal hypotheses derived from regime theory. Rather, it will expand the focus on the independent variable to study effectiveness of institutional complexes (as opposed to the effectiveness of specific regimes), and aim primarily for conceptual development. Given this aim, construct validity will be a central concern. The discussion of this methodological facet will follow into the theoretical discussion in Chapter 3.

[35] See the foreword of Oran Young in Oberthür and Gehring (2006).

Empirical studies will not contribute to theory development unless the unit of analysis is clearly placed within a universe of other relevant cases.[36] The relevant universe for this thesis relates to institutional complexes of different character. Institutional complexes can be defined geographically[37], or functionally[38], but interaction between institutions within different issue areas may also form "interlocking governance structures" that makes them relevant cases of institutional complexes[39]. Chapter 4: Theoretical and Analytical Approach will discuss how this thesis will relate to two levels of analysis. First level relates to the general discussion of the institutional complex that governs the climate change issue area in general, while the second level relates more specifically to the operational level of governance that often is located on the regional level, where different arrangements are.[40] The most relevant universe is therefore institutional complexes for governance within the climate change issue area.

Internal validity relates to a precise establishment of a causal claim. Stokke (2001:8) argues that much studies on institutional interaction have not been able to contribute to theory development because they have not been specific about which of the larger governance questions institutional interplay is set to illuminate, namely, regime formation, regime maintenance, or regime effectiveness As should be clear by now, regime effectiveness is the relevant governance question for this research study. By, this conceptual demarcation the theoretical scope is further specified. However, internal validity is still challenged by the fact that there is only an assumption of a causal claim leading this research. The factors presented in Chapter 1 are *assumed* to contribute to effective cooperation, but there is certainly no guarantee that this will in fact be the outcome.

Another research choice relates to what level of analysis the study of institutional complex is to be studied at. Oberthür and Gehring (2011:44) argue that this phenomenon can be studied through an actor-centered focus and an institutional focus. This thesis will follow the rational assumption, claiming that effective solutions for international cooperation should not be

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36 See Mahony and Gertz (2004) for a discussion of choosing cases from theroretical scope conditions.

37 See Stokke 2011 on the Arctic governance structure.

38 See Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, Sylvia and Kok, Marcel T.J. (2011)

39 See Gehring 2011 on the interlocking structure of trade and environment.

40 Schaffer (2010: 45) argues that the operational level is more centered on "the development of best practices, common policies, and channels of cooperation among governments and businesses that will facilitate the mitigation or adaptation efforts"

conceived of in general terms, but relate to specific characteristics of the relevant actors (Victor 2006). In that sense, this thesis seeks to integrate actors characteristics with the specific features of the institutional complex in East Asia, and the analysis may therefore be seen as both actor-based and institutionalist. The research design seeks to identify mechanisms between the explanatory (actor characteristics) and the intervening variables (institutional complex). However, the intervening variable is the unit of analysis. A comparative design of country characteristics would therefore not be relevant. The theoretical implication of the research strategy will be discussed in Chapter 4: Theoretical and Analytical Approach.

4.3 Choice of case

The East Asian institutional complex for climate governance was chosen as a case because it is an institutional complex "in the making", and in that sense it could function as a "laboratory" for how actors engage within emerging patterns of institutional interaction. The operational level for climate change governance is already an important part of the climate change puzzle, and climate related cooperation in East Asia might potentially become an important mechanism for global governance of climate change if bigger. A choice to study an isolated case of interaction between two institutions would have provided the study with higher analytical rigor. However, in East Asia institutions are coming to life and being called off on a frequent rate, so the instability of institutional arrangements does not invite for this strategy. The actors that will be included in the analysis are China, Japan, ROK and ASEAN. These actors are focused on because of their influential position within the institutional complex. As I have conducted interviews in China and Singapore, the empirical foundation for analyzing these countries interests and preferences is stronger. That may have implications for the analysis and possibly create a bias in the research design. However, the interview guide was constructed to try to make informants in China and Singapore share perspectives on the other countries as well. The informants where all experienced within the field of climate change or foreign policy in their respective countries so I gained insight into perspective relevant for some of the countries not included as well.

4.4 Data collection and considerations over reliability and validity

To be able to answer the research question that guides this research, I have collected empirical observation from documents (primarily national/institutional strategic plans) and interviews with key informants (elite interviews) in Singapore and China. The strategy for data collection was aspired by Aberbach and Rockman's (2002: 673) maxim related to research design in general: "purpose, purpose, purpose". Documents were chosen for their strategic significance for regional cooperation on climate related issues. The informants where chosen because they are either, actors engaged directly in processes of regional cooperation or climate related questions, or they are observers with key knowledge on the issue. I have kept their identity anonymous, but in order to understand whether the quotations in the text stem from "an insider" or "an outsider", I have referred to the former as actors, while the second category is referred to as observers. When referring to all, I have labeled them as informants.

Combining interviews and documents as methods of data collection will provide a stronger empirical foundation for evaluating the potential for effective climate cooperation in the East Asian region than just one of them would. Results from surveys (CSIS report on strategic views on Asian regionalism) and data from internationally recognized indicators (World Bank 2012, COW 2012) will supplement the analysis. In sum, these efforts provides for a methodological triangulation (although within the qualitative method) that may strengthen the analysis.

4.5 Elite interviews

Thirteen interviews were conducted all in all. Twelve were conducted face to face in an environment chosen by the informant, and one was conducted over the phone. Most interviews took around one hour. As empirical material, the interviews will function first and foremost as a guide to untangle complex patterns of interaction. The ambition is therefore not to generalize findings from the interviews, but rather use them to assist the researcher in understanding the points of convergence in the strategic plans and the patterns of institutional interaction in the region. Findings from the document analysis can therefore be reckoned as empirical observations to a larger degree.

The literature is divided in the question of what purpose elite interviews may serve. The different positions reflect epistemologically different perspectives. The positivist position argue that an interview (that standardizes stimuli) can be used to establish objective knowledge about a phenomenon "outside" the interview situation, while the constructivist position argue that the information gathered in an interview is necessarily subjective, and we can therefore not expect to find "true" answers by conducting interviews. The researcher's task in the former approach is to secure reliability by standardizing the stimuli that informants are exposed to as much as possible. In the latter approach it is rather to understand the relationship between a given subjective understanding of a phenomenon and factual conditions regarding the phenomenon that can be identified empirically by other means (Andersen 2006: 283).

Andersen (2006) presents a middle position between these two. If the researcher takes an active role in the interview situation, he can use this situation to interpret information coming from the informant and also test his own assumptions. By being an "active interviewer" reliability and validity can be increased by stronger analytical control. A semi-structured approach to the interview situation may standardize the stimuli to a certain extent, while still being open to understanding the position and perspectives of a given informant.

If these positions where presented as a scale, my research strategy would be located in between Andersen's (2006) middle position and the constructivist understanding. The technique applied in the interviews followed Andersen's (2006) advice to control the conversation by testing out expectations established before the interview as well as concepts taken from the literature. In order to do this, an interview guide was constructed[41]. However, as already mentioned, the intention with the interviews where not to generalize what different groups of actors thought about a subject, and the informants where not chosen because they were representative for such groups. Because generalization was not the goal, not much emphasis was placed on standardizing stimuli in the interview situation. I therefore did not construct and follow *one* interview guide. Rather, the interview guide was adjusted and specialized according to the specific knowledge that the different informants where thought to be able to provide. This allowed me to focus on understanding nuances in the empirical material. Furthermore, because the informants where all highly knowledgeable on the issue,

[41] This may be provided upon request. Send mail to: s.eritsland@gmail.com

the interview guide was also constructed in a cumulative manner where insights gained in previous interviews where used to understand perspectives and information in later interviews. Because the relationship between the researcher and the informants where asymmetrical in the sense that they had superior knowledge on the subject, the questions where often open, and a flexible research strategy was chosen. During the course of the interviews, it became clear that this was a fruitful strategy for my research purpose. The informant often provided new perspectives on the mechanisms in operation, when they were asked open questions. This can be seen as a contribution to increased construct validity.

The research strategy leans towards the constructivist position because the interviews are not seen as information that is used as objective observations. The context that the informants operate in is very different. First of all, they were chosen from two countries with very different roles in the regional cooperative structure. China has primarily focused on internal affairs for the last century. They have also resisted commitments to global cuts in international climate change affairs. At the start of this research process, China was assumed to be a laggard for cooperation of these issues. They also hold a position as "the pivotal actor" in regional affairs. This made Beijing an interesting location to conduct interviews. Again, the informants are not seen as representatives for the Chinese authority (although two actors held central positions within the central authorities), but rather as informants with a unique insight into complex processes that are not necessarily accessible from other sources. Singapore was chosen because it was assumed to represent the opposite position, namely as a pusher for climate cooperation as well as for maximum level of regional cooperation. Rising sea levels pose a severe threat to Singapore. It is also the most prosperous country in ASEAN and accordingly holds a particular position within this organization. It thus has a stake in insuring continued "ASEAN-centrality". I believe that it strengthens the validity of the findings that these two "opposing" perspectives are represented.

Apart from nationality, the informants also hold different positions and have different fields of expertise. A broad divide can be drawn between the informants with knowledge on climate change policies, and those with knowledge on regional cooperation more generally. Some actors had competence on both issues. The informants where selected by the selection based on purpose, as well as the so-called "snow-ball method". This non-random selection process may lead to a skewed sample. However, it would be naive to assume that their national and

occupational context did not affect their understanding of complex issues such as climate change or regional cooperation. It may therefore be problematic to relate to information from such interviews as independent observations. Furthermore, Freedom House categorizes China as not free, while Singapore is categorized as partly free (Freedom House 2012). Given this circumstance, it becomes even more important that answers are analyzed in light of what positions the different informants are in. These factors related to the elite interviews provide incentives for searching for information outside the interview situations.

4.6 Document analysis

National strategic plans by China, Japan, ROK as well as the institutional strategy for ASEAN, have been used for document analysis. Because it is the *potential* for effective cooperation that is the research question here, I did not see much relevance in evaluating the track records of national and institutional efforts. The aim is not to stake out the future direction of climate change policies in the region, but to scrutinize the theoretically derived factors for preconditions for effective cooperation.

The American non-partisan think tank, CSIS, have published three reports that have also been highly valuable for the empirical analysis. The firs report from 2009 is called: "Strategic Views on Asian Regionalism", and is a survey of perception of strategic elites in Asia on "convergence and divergence in national views of regional institution building" (CSIS 2010). The second report released in 2010 is called "Green Dragons – the politics of Climate Change in Asia", and discusses national efforts to combat climate changes. The third report is called "Asia's Response to Climate Change and Natural Disasters – Implications for an Evolving Regional Architecture" (CSIS 2010). These reports are empirically close to the research design in this thesis. However, they are directed towards advising American foreign policy, and they are not anchored within a theoretical context. These two factors led me to conclude that, although they may pose a challenge by guiding the empirical analysis in an excessive way, they may also serve to strengthen the validity of findings. If the findings in this study are in accordance with the findings of this major research project (CSIS Asian Regionalism Initiative) that includes surveys as well as field interviews, this provides a strong empirical foundation for conceptual development.

As George and Bennett (2005:199) emphasize, it is important to question the intended

purpose that the documents were meant to serve when conducting document analysis. To secure reliability, cross-referencing and data triangulation has been applied throughout the research study.

Some practical considerations conclude the methodological chapter. Although none of the information gathered in the interviews are person-sensitive, they may certainly be strategically sensitive. I therefore chose to report the research project to Norwegian Social Science Database (NSD), and got an approval before I conducted the interviews[42]. Because some informants emphasized the importance of preserving their anonymity, I chose to keep all my informants anonymous. This may present a problem for the reliability of the research, because it then more difficult to replicate the findings. However, all interviews have been fully transcribed, and this documentation may be provided upon request[43]. Furthermore, I saw this as a prerequisite for the informants to speak freely. This may enhance validity of the answers they provided. One of the most important methodological principles to the validity of scientific research is that it is clear and transparent how the researcher moved from empirical observations to inferences. Instead of referring to perspectives presented by the informants, I have to a greater extent tried to include quotations in the text. By this way the reader can clearly see which perspectives the inferences build on. This will enhance both reliability and validity of findings. The quotes are assigned to informants with a letter O for observer and A for actor, as well as a random number from one to thirteen. This has been done so that the reader may trace whether the same informant has expressed two opinions, and should also contribute to greater transparency in the text.

[42] Date of approval: 28.02.2012
[43] For this documentation, send mail to: s.eritsland@gmail.com

5 Asia's regional architecture

It is a challenging task to untangle the institutional complex in East Asia. In order to analyze the potential for effective governance within this complex, it is necessary to have a clear image of which institutions function within the region, as well as what kind of historical features they are built upon. I will first seek to map out the most important historical developments in the region after World War II, as well as describe current general features that may color relations between important actors in the region. Lastly, I will present a snapshot of the institutional map in the region over institutions that are relevant for climate change governance.

5.1 Historical summary

The institutional architecture in East Asia was built upon a rocky foundation. In the aftermath of World War II and for decades to come, the region was characterized of a mixture of local uprisings, wars of independence and great power politics. To understand the emergence of the institutional architecture in place, this groundwork also deserves attention. Furthermore, frictions between the parties involved may also impede cooperation on specific issue areas. It is clear that due to various territorial disputes, such frictions remain[44]. Some scholars even argue that frictions have recently increased after having remained relatively stable for about a decade, but others dispute this assertion[45]. I will in the following seek to outline the main political developments in the region following World War II, and proceed to discuss current tensions that regional cooperative arrangements have to engage within.

5.2 Post-WW2: "The world's most turbulent region"

In the period between 1946 and 1979, East Asia was the world's most war-prone region. On average, there where ten regional armed conflicts every year during this period (Tønnesson 2009: 111). 1946 was the worst year, with fifteen armed conflicts, which of eight where wars. The post war instability, when the most massive violence occurred, started with a process of decolonization following the Second World War. The transition was especially dramatic in

[44] Thayer (EAF 2011) claims that the South China Sea dispute has re-emerged as a thorny issue between ASEAN and China.

[45] For this discussion see: Tønnesson (2009)

South East Asia, where the sub-region became entangled in turmoil that lasted well over a decade. The nationalist movements were especially strong in Indonesia, Malaya (former Malaysia), Burma, and French Indochina. The decolonization of East Asia was, according to Buzan (2003:148), different from that occurring in Africa, because it was characterized by a resurgence of pre-colonial patterns of organization. This means that, with the exception of the new state constructions of the Philippines and Indonesia, the remainder of regional nation states could build their legitimacy on national history (ibid.). Another regional feature that stands out is that the region contained China and Japan, two great powers that were never subsumed to imperial rule. However, the presence of legitimate state constructions and two regional, independent great powers did not prevent acute interstate conflicts from arising in the region (ibid.).

East Asia was the field of four bloody civil wars within a decade after World War II, some of which became focal points of the approaching Cold War. In certain respects, the Korean War set the stage for great power rivalry in the region. The Allies decision to part Korea after WW2 triggered a struggle for dominance over the entire territory that gained an ideological dimension and unleashed the "strategic triangle" of conflict between China, Soviet and the US (Ross 1999:83). As a token of gratitude for support under the Chinese civil war (1945-1949), Chairman Mao supported North Korea along with Stalin's Moscow. The US as well as the UN backed South Korea. In 1953, an armistice was agreed upon, although no peace treaty was signed to recognize the formal division of North and South Korea (Palmer et.al. 2007: 881).

The first Indochina War (1946-1954) was also of monumental importance for further developments in the region. The Geneva Conference (1954) sought to deal with both the Korean question and the War of independence in Indochina. As of Korea, no progress was made. Regarding Indochina, the Geneva Accords recognized their independence from France. By these Accords, Vietnam was separated into a northern and southern part, making this a new battlefield for great power rivalry that would last for two decades to come (Palmer et.al (2007: 931).

The Cold War's ideological facet became a guiding principle for the structure of alliances in the region. The Communist front consisted originally of North Korea, North Vietnam, China,

and Soviet, with Laos and Cambodia playing a neutral, but precarious role (Norwegian encyclopedia 2012). Burma was Communists, but chose the strategy of complete isolation. The Vietnam War (1955-1975) (also named the Second Indochina War) proved that the ideological alliance was fragile, as China grew antagonistic towards Soviet. Laos and Cambodia started out with a neutral role, but civil wars (in 1953-1975 and 1965-1975 respectively) established Communist rule in both countries. However, by that time, the Communist alliance was split in two. In 1970, China withdrew from Vietnam, and turned to the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia who was in opposition to the Vietnamese communists. Eight years later Vietnam invaded Cambodia and defeated the Pol Pot regime of Cambodia. China answered by invading North Vietnam, and what is known as the Third Indochina War arose. After one month of fighting Vietnam kept its control over Cambodia, but China was able to round up more support in the region and the Vietnamese position was delegitimized (Norwegian encyclopedia 2012).

The anti-communist side displayed less internal friction during the Cold War. The US may have contributed to this fact by acting as a stabilizing external force. The American strategy in the Cold War era was a hub-and-spoke system where the US engaged with the countries through bilateral relationship, and sought to mediate as a balancing power in the region. The bilateral alliance with Japan was the cornerstone of the system, and Fukuyama (2005: 2) describes it as a father-child dependency during the Cold War. South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and the Philippines also had cooperative ties to the US and Thailand and Philippines was on US side against North Vietnam. In fact, Thailand became a frontline state of ASEAN in the fight against Vietnam (Norwegian encyclopedia 2012).

5.3 Post-Cold War regional order

The fall of Soviet created a power vacuum in parts of the region. China quickly managed to fill that gap. This was predominantly the case on the Korean peninsula. As Soviet withdrew from Vietnam, the area of former Indochina fell under Chinese sphere of influence. (Ross 1999:84). The peninsula thus no longer saw itself divided by outside powers, although scientism towards China has lingered in Vietnam. A rough delineation of today's geography of influence can be made with reference to the main post-Cold War regional structural feature: Chinese domination of mainland East Asia and US domination of maritime East Asia (ibid). Although Japan also managed to regain its strength during the Cold War, it saw itself

restricted from converting this power into influence by the ties of history. From the 1990's Japan's economy also stagnated, and although it is still the world's third largest economy, it is not thought to play a leading role in the region in general. Scholars have therefore characterized the region as bipolar with China and the US as opposing regional great powers (Ross 1999: 82). Even in the period when the US enjoyed undisputed, global superpower status, its regional role did not amount to more than great power status comparable with the Chinese status. This can be explained by the fact that when Soviet fell, the US turned its attention away from Asia and the Pacific. The Obama administration has sent a clear signal that this is about to change, with President Obama's declaration that he would be "the first Pacific President" (The Economist 2011). Which consequences this will have for Chinese possibilities to convert its immense power capabilities into regional influence, is hard to predict. Either way, which actors control the basic game matters for any form of cooperative arrangements. This discussion will therefore continue into the analysis in Chapter 5.

5.4 Current relations: tension or stability?

There has been a relative absence of war in East Asia from 1979 until present. Between the years of 1950 and 1979, around 4 million people were killed in battle, while between 1979 and 2009 the number was down to 100 000 people (Tønnesson 2009:112). Scholars have labeled the period from 1979 to present for "the East Asian peace" (ibid). Various explanations for this stability have been presented. The realist explanation point to the above-mentioned development between the US and China after the Cold War was that they "formed a kind of condominium, organizing East Asia into "two distinct spheres of influence" (Tønnesson 2009:119). The liberalist tradition point to the fact that interdependence has increased, and inter-state war thus have become a costly affair. The constructivist position explains the peaceful period by arguing that there has been "a paradigm shift in the region" that has lowered tension between neighbors (Tønnesson 2009:123). In South East Asia, it is commonly argued[46] that ASEAN built consensus around peaceful means through the so-called "ASEAN way" that emphasizes informal consultation and non-interference. According to the constructivist argument, this "way" of cooperation has been transferred to the North East Asian region through the consultative processes of the ASEAN+ mechanisms, and by these means, trust is spreading and more stable relations are the result. This thesis will relate

[46] See Acharya and Stubbs (2006)

primarily to the neoliberal assumption that states have interests in pursuing common objectives through joint efforts. However, the structural order *does* set the framework for collective action. The realist perspective is therefore also highly relevant. Although ideas matter for effective cooperation, the traditional constructivist research agenda will not be pursued in this thesis. A deeper discussion of the theoretical approach will come in the next chapter.

5.5 Competing visions of a regional structure

The idea of an East Asian Community was born out of Malaysia's Prime Minister's proposal of and East Asian Economic Caucus, which was never materialized (EAEC) (Terada 2003:251). The CSIS report from 2005 on East Asian strategic elites' perspective on the emerging architecture concluded that a weighted average of 81 percent supported the idea of building an East Asian Community. However, this shared perspective evaporates when moving from a grand idea to more specific questions of institution building and institutional reform.

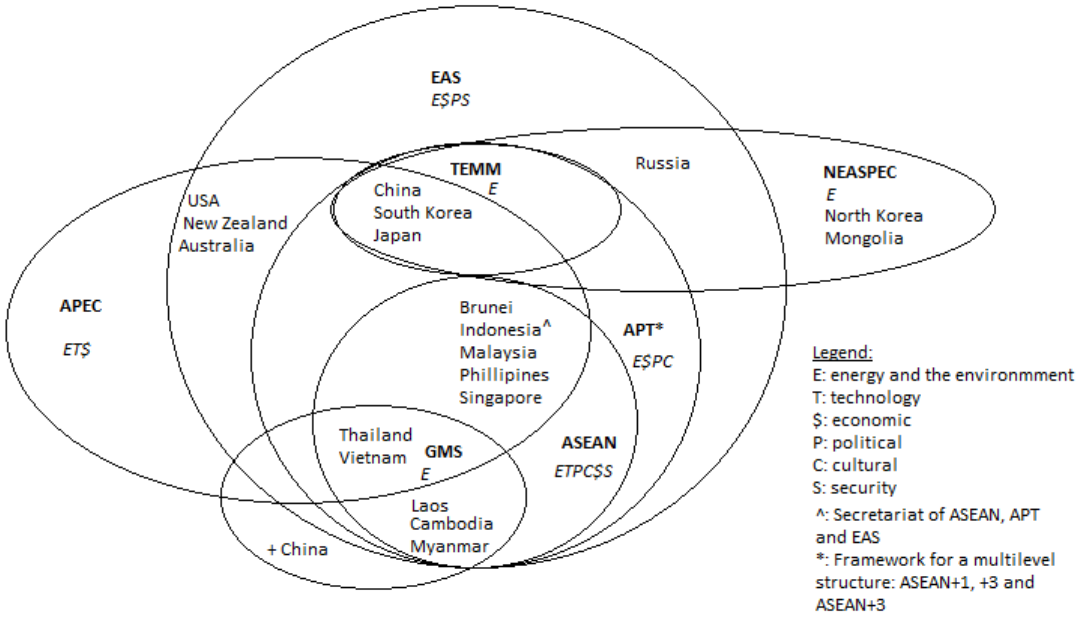
Before inquiring into the institutional structure, it may prove rewording to get an overview of the ongoing debate that acts as a background to institutional development. See Seng (2011) has claimed that the debate can be structured into three competing visions over the reform of Asian regionalism. "The Singapore-school" is the vision that deviates the least from the existing structure. It supports the existing incremental institutional development, but is also open to establishing new institutions to support growing institutional demand. The continued centrality of ASEAN in future institutional development is the core argument of this school. If the great powers of the region would concert on a new grand structure, reminiscent on what happened in post-war Europe, the smaller countries fears that this would undermine their role in regional affairs. An alternative vision presented by Australia's former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has been labeled "the Canberra-school". This position revolves around the idea of an Asia Pacific Community (APC), which is envisioned to function as an overarching institution with centralized tasks and capabilities. The APC should be functionally oriented and the underlying institutions should be streamlined. With these characteristics the vision of Asian integration here presented is more in line with the European experience. Thirdly, the US-based strategy unofficially named "the Washington-school" envisions a functional division of labor and supports a result-based form of regionalism. According to this position,

there is neither the need for an overarching institution nor the discarding of existing institutions. Reformers should rather direct focus towards which interests actors may productively collaborate. Cooperation based on ad hoc coalitions is therefore acceptable. What is relevant, according to this view is that cooperation achieves results: "It's more important to have organizations that produce results, rather than simply producing new organizations" (Clinton 2011, quoted by Seng 2011).

5.6 Sketching an institutional map of the region

As the outline above might have indicated, the region's institutional architecture is to a large degree unsettled. Several initiatives has been promoted and pursued. There is therefore an ongoing rearrangement of institutional construction in the region. Terada (2011) has portrayed the situation as institutional Darwinism. To get and overview of this situation, I will in the following present a brief overview of the cooperative efforts present in the region today. This thesis purpose is to explore the possibilities for climate related cooperation, but multilateral regional efforts are not necessarily addressing climate change in a direct fashion. However, as experienced in the European case, climate change cooperation that is introduced at a late stage of institution building efforts can benefit from strong existing institutional capacity. For now economic cooperation seems to be highest on the agenda. However, Leal-Arcas (2011:23) has argued that RTA's can be used as building blocks towards a strong climate regime by including environmental provisions into the agreement. At the recent APEC Meeting in Honolulu, this is exactly what was initiated (a point further developed below). In the following, I will outline the major regional cooperative efforts both as established and as suggested alternatives. Most focus will be directed towards multilateral efforts, but bilateral efforts also deserve attention. The interplay between these levels of governance is a central feature of today's regional cooperative structure.

Figure 1. A snapshot of the current institutional map of climate related governance East Asia:



Based on: Victor Cha's presentation of the Asian security complex (2010:111)

5.7 Multilateral arrangements

Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

ASEAN is the most institutionalized arrangement in the region. The organization was founded by the 1961 when Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand came together to form ASA, which in 1967 would become ASEAN as expressed by the Bangkok Declaration. Kin Wah (2007: 2) claims that there exists broad consensus that ASEAN was initially formed on security considerations, but that it gained an economic dimension after a while. The fear of Communism was a shared external security concern between the founding states and is thought to have acted as a driver for integration (Kin Wah 2007: 3). An internal consideration was the issue of containment of Indonesian dominance in the region. Furthermore, tension existed between both Malaysia-Indonesia and Singapore-Malaysia, and Kin Wah (ibid) claims that ASEAN was a "face-saving formula" for Indonesia to recognize the new state of Malaysia, and thereby stabilizing internal affairs. In 1971, ASEAN declared itself as a "zone of peace, freedom and neutrality (ZOFPFAN)". This was the forerunner to

the so-called "ASEAN way" (Tønnesson 2009:132). This "way" emphasizes three norms: (1) non-interference in each other's domestic affairs, (2) consensus based planning and decision-making and (3) a preference for national implementation over centralized control (Robinson and Koh 2002: 642).

In 2009, the ASEAN Charter entered into force. This provided ASEAN with a legal body, and strengthened institutionalization. The organization is structured accordingly: The ASEAN Summit acts as "the supreme policy making body of ASEAN" (ASEAN Charter 2007). The ASEAN Community Councils implements policy decisions within the three pillars of the ASEAN Community (ASEAN Political-Security Community Council, ASEAN Economic Community Council and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Council). Under these pillars, there are specific task forces and working groups organized to implement cooperative projects. The institution primarily seeks agreements through soft law such as declarations and compacts. After 35 years, ASEAN has only produced two legally binding agreements (ASEAN Agreement on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)[47] and ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze 2002[48] (Robinson and Koh 2002: 643).

ASEAN engages in climate change governance through the ASEAN Climate Change Initiative (ACCI). This initiative is operated by the ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change (AWGCC) (ASEAN 2007: 3), and functions as a mechanism to coordinate the implementation of the "ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Framework on Climate Change: Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry towards Food Security" (as is common in ASEAN governance, implementation is mainly national[49]). The expressed goal of the multi-sectorial framework is: "To contribute to food security through sustainable, efficient and effective use of land, forests, water and aquatic resources by minimizing the risks and impacts of and the contributions to climate change (ASEAN 2007: 7).

ASEAN+3 – China, Japan, South Korea (APT):

After the Asian financial crisis in 1997, the three North East Asian countries agreed, on one of their informal meetings at the ASEAN Summit, to create a forum for this enlarged ASEAN

[47] This agreement has not been ratified (Robinson and Koh 2002: 643).
[48] This agreement is binding, but has no punitive measures (Koh and Bhullar 2010: 9)
[49] See Koh and Robinson (2002) for a discussion of national mechainsms for implementation in ASEAN.

mechanism. A complex institutional framework was agreed upon in the … Declaration (ASEAN 2012). The framework is referred to as APT. This framework consists of three levels of governance where all the meetings within the APT framework take place, namely "ASEAN+1", "+3" and "ASEAN+3" (Suzuki 2004: 2). At the ASEAN+1 level, the ASEAN countries meet separately with China, Japan and Korea. The +3 level is separate forum for China, Japan and Korea. The ASEAN+3 is the largest multilateral platform and here all the thirteen countries meet. The ASEAN organization does not constitute a level within the multilayered structure of the APT framework.

The APT overall framework is based on "conference diplomacy", defined as "part of the management of relations between governments and of relations between governments and international organizations that takes place in international conferences" (Kaufmann 1996: 7, in Suzuki 2004: 1). An essential aspect of such conference diplomacy is that meetings are used to promote cooperation rather than to adopt common positions on given issues. Meetings at all levels are both conducted on a regular basis as well as ad hoc. Member states are allowed to conduct bilateral agreements within the framework, if the specific deal is endorsed at the three levels within the APT framework (Suzuki 1004:11). Malaysia proposed to set up an ASEAN+3 secretariat in 2001, but so far no such thing exists (Suzuki 2004:8).

Cooperation within the APT Framework takes place within five issue areas: Financial, agricultural, economic, crime, and environment. The role of APT in climate related issues will be further discussed in Chapter 6. However, an interesting feature of the APT environmental cooperation deserves attention in this section as well.

The Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM)

Contrary to the other tripartite meetings between the North East Asian countries; China, Japan and ROK, the TEMM meetings actually took place already in 1999, before the meetings at the other levels in the APT. Suzuki (2004: 26) claims that one of the motivations behind this mechanism was the deadlock on the Kyoto Protocol in the UNFCCC. TEMM has functioned as an arena where members discuss how they can realize the objectives they have put forward as part of the UNFCCC process. Furthermore, they have also focused on "concrete project-style cooperation" (Suzuki 2004: 27). For comparison, the North-East Asia accounted for almost 60% of GHG emissions in the region, while the South-East Asia accounts for only

10% (NEASPEC 2011). The TEMM forum thus includes few, but important actors, and may carry potential for real leverage on climate change issues in the East Asian region.

East Asian Summit (EAS)

Suzuki (2004: 9) claims that the idea of an "East Asian Summit" (EAS) came in conjuncture with the discussion around Malaysia's proposal to set up a secretariat for the ASEAN+3 forum in 2001. The East Asia Vision Group (EAVG), a group set up to make recommendations for institution building in the East Asian region, submitted their report in 2001, and recommended that the annual summit meetings of ASEAN+3 evolved into an East Asian Summit (EAVG report 2001: 13). They also recommended the "Establishment of an East Asian forum consisting of the region's governmental and non-governmental representatives from various sector, with the aim to serve as an institutional mechanism for broad-based social exchanges and, ultimately, regional cooperation (ibid). What evolved was instead a new institutional platform, which originally encompassed all the members of the APT framework, as well as Australia, New Zealand and India (ASEAN 2005). EAS held its first Summit in 2005, and agreed to serve as "a forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity in East Asia" (ibid). EAS is today an alternative platform to the APT platform, but still places itself as "an integral part of the evolving regional architecture", and proclaims that it "will be consistent with and reinforce the realization of the ASEAN Community" (ibid). In 2011, the US and Russia where invited, and accepted to join, as members of the EAS.

Different levels of ambitions over how deep integration one should seek through the EAS are already manifested. The US is primarily expressing interest to take part in the strategic dialogue, and leave functional aspects out, while ASEAN seem eager to demonstrate practical leadership in pushing the agenda forward (Bower, Hamre 2011). Japan has proposed to form a "Comprehensive Economic Partnership" (CEPEA or ASEAN+6) under the EAS banner (Mun-Heng Toh 2009). A cross-country study group recommended that CEPEA should concentrate on economic cooperation, facilitation of trade and investment, and liberalization of trade and investment. Mun-Heng Toh (2009, EAF 2012) argues that CEPEA may be used as "a platform for more action-oriented, in-depth collaboration in "immediate" and functional region-wide issues (often with global implications) such as climatic change related policies,

energy (oil) collaboration, financial swaps, pandemics control, and pan region double taxation agreement".

The EAS has five priority areas, namely: finance, energy, education, avian flu prevention and disaster management (ASEAN 2010). In the Chairman's Statement Of The East Asia Summit (EAS) Foreign Ministers' Consultation (ibid.) it is emphasized that "The Ministers reaffirmed climate change as one of the key areas of concern for the EAS which requires urgent concerted actions at national, regional and international levels." (ASEAN 2010: 2). As for institutional arrangement, the East Asia Summit Environmental Ministers Meeting (EAS EMM) deals specifically with environmental issues, through this mechanism they have established the "Environmentally Sustainable Cities" (ESC) (MOE, JAPAN 2012).

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

Although APEC is one of the first multilateral arrangements in the region, it is perceived to have lost momentum as a major institutional regional force (interview SS). APEC was established in 1989 and involves 21 member states in the Asia Pacific Region. It aims to support open trade and economic regional cooperation, but has found itself in a deadlock for the last decade. The US still holds APEC as an important institution, and as what appears to be a consequence of the US strategic shift towards the Asia Pacific region, the recent APEC Ministers Meeting in Honolulu agreed on some important policies for its priority areas of enhanced trade, green growth and regulatory reform. Part of "the Honolulu Declaration" was an agreement that the members should within 2012, develop a list of environmental goods that contribute to green growth, and concurrently lower the tariffs on these products within 2015. The ultimate goal of the institution is expressed is to establish a free-trade agreement (FTAAP) spanning the whole region and resulting in "a seamless regional economy" (APEC 2010).

Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP):[50]

TPP is a recent initiative promoted by the Obama administration under his recent Asia Pacific tour. This institution is meant to be a trade pact that involves the countries of the Pacific Rim. The other members of the proposed partnership are: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile,

[50] A suggested institution.

Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam. The US has rejected Chinese membership and commentators have speculated over whether these types of US initiatives are intended to cut China off its trading partners (Drysdale 2011). According to Cai (East-West Center 2011), the Japanese intention to join the arrangement particularly "stirs the water" of East Asian cooperation, because China fears that the TPP might replace the East Asian track for economic cooperation. The TPP arrangement overlaps with other regional institutions in terms of membership, but is not directly linked to the institutional architecture in the region (Froman, CSIS 2012).

Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS)

This multilateral institution is a system for resource management of the six countries that share the Mekong River, namely, Cambodia, China, Lao, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. The institution was established in 1992 with support from the ABD, and focuses on biodiversity conservation, land-use planning, strategic environmental assessment, climate change, environmental performance assessment, and energy and capacity development. Its proclaimed aim is "to strengthen national strategies on resource management and supplement with regional linkages" (GMS-EOC 2012).

North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC)

NEASPEC is an arrangement under the UN ESCAP umbrella that includes China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Japan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Russian Federation. Their major programs include: Mitigation of Transboundary Air Pollution from Coal Fired Power Plants, Prevention and Control of Dust and Sandstorms from Source Areas in China and Mongolia, Cooperation Mechanism for Nature Conservation in transboundary areas and eco-efficiency partnership (NEASPEC 2012).

5.8 Lower level/informal networks

Asian Co-Benefit Partnership (ACP)

This informal network was formally launched in 2010, and includes various stakeholders (such as government agencies, international development organizations, academe, civil

society and the private sector) in East Asia. The main motivation behind the arrangement is to promote the Co-benefit approach to policy-making in the region. Its major functions include: information sharing and knowledge management, development of co-benefits policies and project, and efforts to strengthen regional cooperation to promote co-benefits (APC 2012).

Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (AECEN)

AECEN is another informal network, launched in 2005. Members consist of national and sub-national environmental agencies from Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, China, Lao PDR, Malaysia, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. This network aims "to promote improved compliance with environmental legal requirements in Asia" (AECEN 2012). AECEN focuses on sharing best practices for compliance and enforcement with environmental legal requirements in the wider Asian region (ibid).

Japan-led initiatives

Japan has initiated a number of informal institutional arrangements. Aside from the allocation of development funding from Japan towards climate change adaptation in the region's developing countries, the country has also established regional forums such as the "Clean Asia Initiative", the "Regional 3R Forum", "Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST)", and "Water and Air Environment Measures (WEPA and EANET). These initiatives are primarily aimed at spreading knowledge on climate change polices best practices as well as serving as an informal platform to develop networks of stakeholders in the region (MOE, JAPAN 2012).

5.9 Bilateral arrangements

Other than these multilateral arrangements, there are also things happening at the bilateral level. Many of these agreements may today seem more expressively directed towards environmental cooperation. Leal-Arcas (2011) has surveyed some of the bilateral agreements between the US and China, and found many with potential substantive effect on climate efforts, amongst other The US-China Renewable Energy Partnership (USCREP). China has also initiated many bilateral environmental agreements in the East Asian region such as with South Korea (1993), North Korea (1992), Japan (1994), and also in wider Asia with India

(1993), Pakistan (1996), and Sri Lanka (1998). Last addition to such environmental agreements is the China-ASEAN Environment Cooperation Center (CAEC) (CEAC 2012).

Summing up, this chapter provides an overview over the many institutions operating within the climate change issue area. In order to limit the complexity of the coming analysis, I have decided to only include the three most important institutions in the East Asian region, namely; ASEAN, APT and the EAS in the analysis. The following chapter will seek to analyze the deeper structures that these institutions are embedded in, and by that direct attention towards the most important driving forces behind the institutional complex in East Asia, namely; interests, power and leadership.

6 Driving forces: interest, power and leadership

According to Victor (2006: 91): "Every analysis of international cooperation must begin with the question: who wants to cooperate, and why?" In accordance with the rationalist assumption, he states that we should not try to comprehend demand for cooperation in general terms, but rather by focusing on the actor's characteristics. Following this line of reasoning, Zelli (2011:199) draws attention to the deeper structures that the institutions are embedded in, and by that he follows conventional regime theory placing institutions as intervening variables. Interests, power and provision of leadership are the three variables assumed to create a favorable environment for intergovernmental cooperation within a given issue area. More specifically should the power distribution over the interest constellation be benign instead of malignant, the powerful actor/coalition of actors should be willing to secure the provision of common goods and the problem should ideally be well understood.

A benign interest constellation is one where actors' strategic interests converge and these interests are not subsumed to stark competition. Miles et.al (2002) found that when a system of high capacity faces a benign problem that is well understood the success rate was .95. When a system of low capacity faces a malignant problem that is poorly understood, the success rate they found was .08. Malignancy is a problem that can be overcome, but that nonetheless represents a significant challenge to effective cooperation. Malignancy relates first and foremost to externalities and competition. Where competition is present and the "domains of jurisdiction are incongruent with boundaries of natural resource systems or systems of human activities cause externalities", the political situation can be deemed malignant because there is incongruity between the rational calculus of individual actors and the collective good (Underdal 2002: 19). If the power distribution in a situation like this is asymmetrical, the configuration is highly malignant. If there is a strong functional interdependence between actors that engage with one another in complex interaction patterns, uncertainty will motivate them to cooperate and the interest constellation is mostly benign. Strong interdependence will also, to a certain extent, moderate asymmetrical power distributions in a way that is favorable towards cooperation. One last factor that may motivate states to engage in cooperation, and by that will increase the probability of effective

cooperation, is that states identify relationships involving synergy or potential economy-of-scale activities (Underdal 2002).

As this analysis is focused on the preconditions of effective cooperation, attention will primarily be directed to the interest configuration in the basic game. This is because the configuration in the basic game is relevant to what type of policies that are likely to be implemented, whereas the configuration in the decision game is relevant for what kind of policies are likely to be adopted. Implementation is clearly what matters for effective outcomes so the choice of research focus should be reasonable.

Climate change economists generally assume two factors to be decisive for states motivation for climate change action. The first relates to degree of vulnerability to climate change, while the other is their marginal cost of control. As political scientist we are also concerned about the political feasibility of climate change mitigation. The East Asian countries vulnerability to climate change and feasibility of mitigation efforts will be scrutinized below. In my analysis, I will also add a dimension concerning these countries' willingness, not only to take action, but to cooperate over the issue of climate change. This section of the analysis will ultimately seek to answer Victor's question: (2006: 91) "who wants to cooperate and why?" By examining the national strategic plans of China, Japan and Korea as well as for ASEAN, I will aspire to document what kind of interest constellation that exists in East Asia in relation to regional climate cooperation[51]. Interviews with key informants from the region will be used to supplement the analysis.

Although all countries will be adversely affected by climate changes, it is a mistake to assume that all have an immediate interest in doing something to prevent them from happening. Victor (2006) argues that although countries are vulnerable to climate change this may not provide sufficient motivation to engage in committing cooperation for two reasons. First, the ability to "climate proof" oneself is largely dependent on the level of development. As the renowned economist Wildavsky stated, "Richer is safer" (referred to in Victor 2006: 93).

[51] China: China's 12th 5 year plan (2011-2015), China's UNFCCC communiqué, Japan: "Building a Low Carbon Society (2007), Korea: "Road to our Future: Green Growth – National Strategy and the Five Year Plan (2009-2013), ASEAN: the "ASEAN Declaration on Environmental Sustainability" (2007), "ASEAN Declaration on the 13th Session of the Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC, "ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint" (Section D10 on Responding to Climate Change and Addressing Its Impacts) (2007), ASEAN Charter (2008).

Secondly, when you add the fact that climate changes operates with a long time horizon, the calculus by poor countries, when they put development first, might be entirely rational (Victor 2006: 93). In the coming analysis, I will present the interest constellation of the most important actors of regional affairs, namely; China, Japan, ROK and ASEAN.

6.1 China:

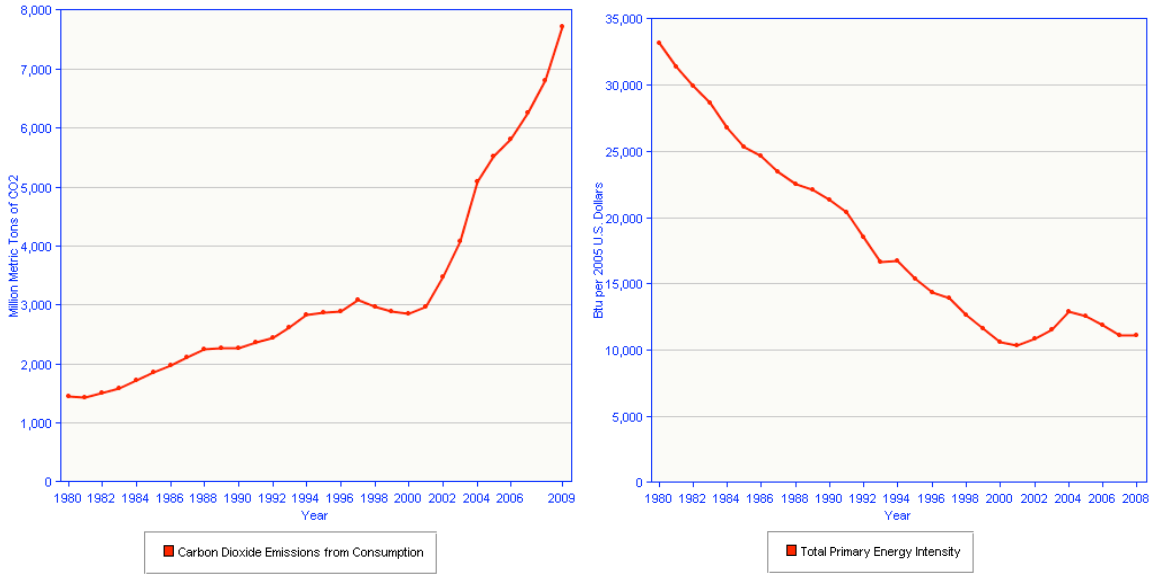
China's role in climate change mitigation is highly disputed, and the country is generally both praised and reproached for their efforts. Hailed as a "world champion" of renewable energy by some, while criticized as a laggard on the low carbon pathway by others (Ladislaw and Lakano 2011: 1). In reality, China represents a complex profile on the climate change issue. It is currently the world's biggest emitter, and according to the projections of the IEA (World Energy Outlook 2010, 672-73), if the Chinese economy does not collapse, or major technological breakthroughs occur, then China will not only be the largest source of new emissions, but also be among the largest historical emitters.

In the UNFCCC process, China has taken a reluctant role (CSIS 2010). Alongside India and US, they have defined their interests by focusing on the high cost of mitigation, and appear reluctant to commit to binding rules. They furthermore uphold their prerogatives for industrial development, and advocate the right to have the same structure of opportunities for economic developments as the Western countries had. The CSIS claim that these arguments primarily reflect strategic calculations, and the way that that China has defined its international role (CSIS 2010:6). On the domestic level, much indicates that climate change mitigation is, at once, both easier and more difficult to implement in China today than in other countries. The difficulties obviously pertain to the astronomical rise in demand for energy in China today due to a steady economic growth at around 10% yearly during the last decade[52]. The output of climate friendly policies is nowhere near keeping up with the acceleration of energy demand. In average, two new coal factories open every week (BBC News 2007). The new coal factories are replacing inefficient ones, and the graph below clearly demonstrates China's recent achievements in terms of energy efficiency. However, the graph at left, demonstrating China's total Carbon Dioxide Emissions form Consumptions, may serve to sober up the optimism regarding China's future growth path. As China's communication to the UNFCCC

[52] Primary energy demand in China was calculated to be over 3000 tons coal equivalent in 2010. According to projections of business as usual, this number may increase to over 6000 tons in 2050. (Source: Jiang Kejun, Energy Research Institute, NDRC, referred to by Ladislaw and Lakano 2011: 8).

clearly states: “Thus China can make positive contributions to mitigating global climate change while emissions have to be necessarily increased” (UNFCCC 2004).

Figure 2. China’s total Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Consumptions and Total Primary Energy Intensity:



Source: US Energy Administration (2012)

As a pivotal actor, China’s participation in climate change cooperation is critical, both on an international level and regional level. I will in the following seek to answer the question of whether China wants to cooperate on climate change, and if so, then how?

6.1.1 Vulnerability

First of all, China recognizes that to follow the current industrial development path with carbon-intensive export led growth does not support their rational interest because China is believed to be one of the countries in the world most exposed to the impacts of climate change. A report by David Wheeler (2011) on behalf of the World Bank, listed China as the world’s most vulnerable countries in terms of climate change impacts (Wheeler 2011:18). Due to the geographic scope of the country, the projected impacts are diverse. Some of the most important impacts are assumed to be melting glaciers, rising sea levels (threatening cities like the world metropolis, Shanghai which has already sank by 1.76 meters), biodiversity loss, and increase in natural disasters (Chih-Yin Lai, Woodrow Wilson Center 2009).

6.1.2 Political feasibility

The section above demonstrated China's great challenges in terms of climate change mitigation. However, the other side of the story is that they are in a good situation to implement a transition to a green economy. With the 10% steady growth rate, enormous investments in infrastructure are being made, and this is generally an ideal period to implement a transition period in the economy (O_1, March 2012). With a low cost labor force, and high subsidies from the government, China also still has a comparative advantage for building up renewable energy. Furthermore, the implementation of new policy directions and deployment of new technology in China goes through bureaucratic processes that are more efficient than most countries so their ability to quickly implement new products is impressive (J). This situation that China finds itself in makes them wary about binding targets, but eager about transition efforts[53]. A fact that may support this claim is that climate change is institutionalized as a developmental issue, with the National Reform and Development Commission (NDRC) in charge of climate change policies. In the following, I will discuss four rationales that China has for engaging in transition efforts to a low carbon pathway as well as their interests in cooperation on transition efforts.

The first reason is that the potential for so-called co-benefits are in the flux in China these days. The five-year plan (National People's Congress of P.R. China, 2007) also pays particular attention to this phenomenon. Co-benefits basically means that by reducing the emission of carbon dioxide you are also able to reduce the amount of sulfur monoxide as the main contributor to the immense problem of air quality in China. Environmental problems, like air quality, are currently acting as a significant obstacle for further economic development. The World Bank states that "the costs of environmental degradation and resource depletion in China approached 10 percent of GDP over the past decade air pollution

[53] Specific emission reduction targets are avoided in China's five-year plan. The focus is rather on efforts to decouple future growth from heavy resource use, greenhouse gas emissions and environmental damages. The goals set forth in this regard, (Five Year Plan 2008-2013) are ambitious. Resource conservation is the top priority. "Massive reductions in energy consumption intensity and carbon dioxide emissions should be regarded as binding targets to efficiently control greenhouse gas emissions" (2007: 29). National binding targets for 2015 include: an increase of non-fossil fuel usage in primary energy consumption to reach 11.4%, a decrease in energy consumption per unit of GDP with 16%, and a decrease in CO_2 emission per unit of GDP with 17% (2007: 3-4).

accounted for 6.5 percent, water pollution 2.1 percent, and soil degradation 1.1 percent." (Word Bank 2012). One observer presents it this way:

> *Nonetheless, China still sees it as important to cooperate on climate. We see a link between the global aspect of climate changes and the local aspect of air pollution. Due to this perspective, China is now actively pursuing co-benefits. (A_1 March 2012)*

The second reason relates to the economic benefits that may be captured by restructuring the industrial base in the country by developing renewable energy and securing energy efficiency. The World Bank in collaboration with the Chinese Government's Development Research Center of the State Council (DRC), recently released a report named "China 2030" (World Bank 2012). A central message from this report was precisely that for China to avoid becoming locked-in in a "middle income trap", measures should be taken to increase energy efficiency in the industrial sector and to realize the potential for green development as a new source of economic growth. Up to now, the industry has been overwhelmingly export-oriented (worth of export amounts to $1.898 trillion (2011 est.) number one in the world (CIA Factbook 2012), and growth has been supported by the production of coal. As an environmental economic policy analyst (O_2, March 2012) points to the low-level manufactory industry is currently dominating, but this is not economically sustainable in the long run. When China's labor costs, land costs and resource cost rise, an upgrade will become a necessity. A more consumption-oriented economy can be less dependent on coal, and a high end, and more environmental friendly infrastructure is likely to emerge. Furthermore, he points to the issue of employment. The export industry was hit hard by the financial crisis, and there is currently a need to support new industries that can absorb employment. Renewable energy is in that sense seen as a new growth area. He further states:

> *"The environmental industry is a hot issue in China. Everybody are talking about this, even the ones that don't know what climate change is". (O_2 March 2012)*

Another observer follows the same line of reasoning:

> *"The most important is to restructure the energy sector by moving from coal to clean renewable energy. Renewable energy is seen as Chinas new growth engine." (O_1, March 2012)*

Thirdly, the concern for energy security is also relevant factor of motivation for pursuing a restructuring of the industrial structure away from fossil fuel dependent production and over to green technology and production. As energy consumption has increased dramatically over the last decades, coal prices have gone up and domestic supply of electricity is strained. This has led the production sector to be increasingly dependent on imported energy. The World

Bank warns that if China follows the path of business-as-usual, then by 2030, 75% of its oil and 50% of its natural gas may have to be imported (World Bank 2012). In sum, opportunities to increase efficiency in traditional energy sectors, seize the potential in a new sector for growth, capitalize the on positive environmental side-effects of reduced fossil fuels dependence and improve on energy security for the future, are the main domestic factors motivating the Chinese government to embark on an economic transformation of growth patterns.

Lastly, China recognizes an opportunity to build up its international image through climate change action (A_1 March 2012). Actors on the international level have put significant pressure on China in the last decade to change its position in the formal negotiations. Pursuing development strategies that will lead to lower carbon emissions in the future would build up on the image of China as a responsible international actor while not standing in its way to continued economic growth. China is also sensitive towards the changing structure of economic demand on the international level. The five-year plan states that under the current scenario of the international stage: "China' external international environment has proved to be more complicated" (National People's Congress of the PR of China 2007).

Although we can concur that China sees a national interest in changing its own growth patterns, this does not necessarily entail that they are motivated for international or regional cooperation on the issue of climate change. In fact, one could argue that, if the economic benefits of changing the direction of future growth in China is so considerable that some have indicated (World Bank 2012) then they may well proceed with these efforts without seeking committing cooperation with other countries. Following this argument further, the much-cited general reluctance in China to delegate authority and impinging on sovereignty, needs no further elaboration.

The informants provide different views on the topic of China's perspective towards intergovernmental climate cooperation. One observer from the (O_3 March 2012) argues that China is in an identity crisis, having "geopolitical strength combined with a development domestic deficit". This theme of an "identity crisis" is repeated in a number of interviews, and may serve to explain China's somewhat ambiguous relation to climate change cooperation.

One observer (O_2 March 2012) argues that due to China's reservation towards committing itself to mandatory cuts in the international process, the country has turned its attention to materialized cooperation in environmental protection and emission cutting in other forums. Within bilateral and multilateral arrangements outside the UNFCCC, China is showing interest in clean energy cooperation and cooperation for technology transfer. On a general account, he claims that there are two main driving forces behind China's motivation for climate change cooperation: technology transfer and funding[54]. For that reason, he argues that industrialized countries are seen as more relevant cooperative partners on this field, than for example South East Asia. On the other hand, two actors engaged in the central administration in Beijing argue that energy and environmental issues are figuring as prominent aspects of the agenda on a number of institutional platforms in the region. One actor engaged in foreign policy, argues that China currently prioritizes economic cooperation in the region, but that energy and environmental issues have an instructive function because they can contribute to building trust and laying the groundwork for deeper cooperation in other fields in the region. The overarching regional priority is according to her the strategy of securing "good neighbors".

To sum up, climate change is not necessarily a subject that is high on the Chinese agenda in its own right, but the pressure from the international level is seen as an opportunity that the leadership could use to push through efforts that are unpopular, but perceived as necessary. The domestic factors for change are according to many of the experts most important in motivating reform and emission reduction.

6.2 Japan

According to the CSIS (Freeman and Searight 2010: 4) Japan, Republic of Korea and Indonesia have all taken a "forward-leaning" position in the UNFCCC. Japan is the only country in East Asia that is classified as an Annex 1 country, and has committed to 60-80

[54] China's Five Year Plan (2008-2015) (2007: 31) states that: "We will also develop pragmatic cooperation in areas like scientific research, technology research and development and capacity building, as well as push for the establishment of an international cooperation platform and management system for funding and technology transfer".

percent reduction from the current level by 2050 (Action Plan 2008: 5). Because Japan is already obliged to reduce emissions, they have a stronger interest in acting as pushers for other countries to accept similar commitments. Due to their heavy dependence on imported energy and natural resources, they have successfully implemented energy efficiency efforts[55].

However, with a highly energy-efficient economy, it is hard to further control emissions at home. Furthermore, Japan has a mature economy, and little investments are currently being made in infrastructure. These factors have led them to direct their attention outwards, and act as a protagonist of climate change cooperation both regionally and internationally (amongst other, they are one of the world's biggest users of CDM) (CSIS 2011:251). The national strategic plan of Japan also expresses clear ambition to maintain a foothold as a leader on this issue in the world and in the East Asian region (Government of Japan 2007). As the discussion below will show, Japan faces some considerable obstacles on the way.

6.2.1 Vulnerability

Japan is undoubtedly also extremely vulnerable to climate changes. Wheeler's (2011) showed that Japan had in 2008 the world's 5th most vulnerable population, in terms of exposure to rising sea level. As an archipelago consisting of more than 3900 islands, and a population that ranks as the 10th largest in the world, the report classifies 9.8 million people as vulnerable. Returning natural disasters already haunts the country, and a more volatile environment is unquestionably in their national interest to avoid. However, as mentioned earlier, not all vulnerable countries will necessarily seek climate cooperation, because of their own ability to "climate proof" themselves.

6.2.2 Political feasibility

Japan is having trouble implementing their vision of a low carbon society domestically.[56] However, Schaffer (2010: 56) has argued that Japan has more to contribute with in regional climate change affairs. According to her, the country is searching for a new regional persona, and that climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies are integral parts of this strategy. In the following, I will focus on this aspect.

[55] Energy efficiency has improved by a third since the 1970's (Pumphrey and Ladislaw 2010: 26)
[56] Argued by Seiji Ikkatai (2010). The Japanese vision is decribed in the report: "Building a Low Carbon Society" (MOE, Japan 2007).

Expanded cooperation on this field support Japanese interest in multiple ways. Japan is an industry leader within clean energy technology, and they are eager to share (or sell) their innovative solutions (Schaffer 2010: 56). This is reflected in their UNFCCC proposal, where Japan has advocated the need for different mechanisms to facilitate for cooperation on technology, and have favored a bottom-up sector-based approach (Government of Japan 2008:6). A leading position within the so-called "green economy" is not taken for granted. According to a proposal of the Japanese high-level "Council on the Global Warming Issue", we are seeing "the beginning of a new competition in which carbon is an implicit cost". In this setting, Japan needs to "aggressively take part in the process to formulate rules" if it is to retain its economic competitiveness (Council on the Global Warming Issue 2008:9).

Nuclear power is Japan's major economic strength related to energy, and export of nuclear technology is placed as the core of the low carbon energy strategy. An observer in Singapore notes that the domestic use of nuclear power appears to have become increasingly politically untenable, and that this is leading them to accelerate their export of these technologies (O_3 March 2012).

Political leadership within the climate change issue area is also high on Japan' agenda, and they aspire to project leadership through multiple channels. As the host country for the establishment of the Kyoto Protocol, it has a stake in assuring that the Protocol succeeds. The strategic plan emphasizes that broad participation is the unrelenting goal, and Japan will "put in its utmost efforts" to ensure that the United States as well as the developing countries will all be subsumed to the same global rules. To engage developing countries, a significant part of the Japanese aid budget is now being allocated to climate friendly development projects, and Japan was in 2009, the country that allocated most of its aid towards climate change efforts (Castro and Hammond 2009:i). The benefiters of this support are primarily located in South East Asia.

However, for Japan faces challenges in their efforts to build up a leadership role on the regional level. Much due to historical features (as discussed in Chapter 5), Japan's role in the region is complicated. Without having fully resolved historical tangles with its neighbors, Japan still gained the lead as the head of the flying geese formation during the wave of

industrialization in the East Asia. Today, the country is still restrained from exerting significant influence for historical reasons, and yet it remains one of the world's most important economic powerhouses, and in that sense, a force to be reckoned with. During the previous decade, Japan faced a number of domestic problems that would limit their capacity for external influence further. Economic downturns and an aging population have become domestic concerns on top of the Japanese agenda the last years.

6.3 Republic of Korea

CSIS (2010) claimed that Korea is one of the "forward-leaning" countries in the UNFCCC process. It has a particular place in the international climate change game because it is an OECD country that is classified as a non-Annex 1 country. With a C02-emission level of 10.5 metric tons per capita (in 2008), and a current GDP of 1,014,483,158,314 USD (in 2010) this classification seems increasingly outdated (World Bank 2012). Balancing the role of developing and developed, Korea started with a defensive position, but changed position when embracing the strategy of green growth as a development strategy. The main motivations behind this shift are the recognition of the economic advantage of being an early mover, and the opportunity to improve the country's international stature (CSIS 2010:21).

6.3.1 Vulnerability

Assessments presented by the Department of Environmental Cooperation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, estimate that climate change is already showing significant detrimental effects on Korea. Wheeler (2011:22) classifies that in 2008, 4.8 million people where vulnerable to rising sea levels in Korea. That is number 8 in the world. During the last 20 years the country has seen extreme weather rise in intensity and frequency. Amongst other, the last 20 years involved incidents like the heaviest snowfall in 32 years, the worst draughts ever recorded, and the heaviest rainfall in 37 years. Incidents of typhoons, hurricanes, heavy snow, drought, hail, yellow sand storms etc. has increased from 48 cases in 1910 to 190 cases in 1990. Apart from the damage these natural disasters make, the agricultural sector may not exclusively be affected in a negative manner, as cultivation of warm season fruits may improve. The forest sector will be increasingly exposed to forest fires, and the fishery sector may see climate change induce red tide that will cause great harm to the reproduction of fish and shellfish. Furthermore, if sea levels rise by 1 meter: "1.2% of the total territory (2,643

km²) and 2.6% of the total population (approximately 1,250,000 people) will be vulnerably exposed to the flood. Health problems are already caused by climate induced environmental conditions, and will increase due to an increase in intense heat and outbreaks of malaria (Wheeler 2011:22).

6.3.2 Political feasibility

Korea has had a tremendous economic growth during the last decade. This growth has largely been based on energy-intensive sectors with export comprising half of the national GDP. Between 1990 and 2005 the GHG emissions in Korea increased by 96.8%. This was the highest recorded rate in the OECD at the time. With steel, cement and petrochemicals as the most important industries (8.0 % of the country's GDP), Korea is a low energy-efficient country as compared to the other OECD countries. In fact, the CSIS (2010: 24) reports that its energy efficiency in 2006 was approximately 40 percent of the level in Japan. Korea is under pressure from international actors, but has also recognized domestic opportunities for action and cooperation on climate change.

Korea would economically clearly benefit from improved energy efficiency. Furthermore, today 97% of energy consumption comes from imported sources, and oil constitutes half of the energy import. Energy security is thus another issue high on the Korean agenda. Indeed the National Strategy and Five-Year Plan (2009-2013), "Road to Our Future: Green growth", highlights energy independence as one of its main priorities for future growth. The strategic plan draws out three main directions for Korea's future policy: (1) "Adapt to climate change and secure energy independence", (2) "Generate new growth engines, (3) "Improve quality of life and national image" (CSIS 2010:30).

Korea seems clearly motivated to cooperate on climate change, also on a regional level. In the same vein as China and Japan, Korea has favored technical cooperation to mitigate climate changes. Within such arrangements, Korea aspires to pursue opportunities to promote a strong position as a frontrunner in green growth policies on the world stage. Korea portrays itself as a "green bridge-state" that could bind developing countries and developed countries together (ibid). This has led them to actively pursue cooperation, also in the region. Several of the observers (A_1 March 2012 and O_2 March 2012)) argued that Korea has taken a very proactive stance on climate change cooperation. In 2008, they initiated the East Asia Climate

Partnership to promote the paradigm of "green growth". The country has furthermore donated a considerable amount of resources to UN ESCAP's effort to promote green growth in the region, and the second largest package of their ODA is directed towards green growth in the region.

6.4 ASEAN

As discussed in chapter 5, ASEAN gathers the predominantly poor countries within South East Asia. However, there is significant heterogeneity within the organization, with membership including countries such as Singapore, but also Myanmar – where only 13% of the population has access to electricity.[57] Due to the low development levels in many of these countries, neither of them (with the important exemption of Indonesia) are heavy emitters. Cooperative efforts within this organization have thus so far primarily focused on environment and adaptation rather than mitigation of climate change.[58] Koh and Robinson (2002: 14) argue that ASEAN has in general "adopted a reactive rather than a proactive approach to environmental protection". An observer in Singapore sees it this way:

> *Many countries [within ASEAN] still emphasize development. Whether sustainable or not, low carbon or not, just development (O_2 March 2012).*

6.4.1 Vulnerability

The ten member countries of ASEAN are exposed to various degrees of vulnerability related to climate changes, but there are several factors that apply for most of the countries. The highly populated and economically important cost lines in ASEAN countries are exposed to rising sea levels. Most of the countries are also significantly dependent on climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture, fisheries, forestry and natural resources. Having a low development level generally exposes countries to climate change vulnerability, and also limits their national capacity in financial, technological and institutional matters. To repeat (Victor's man), "richer is safer". The observed trends so far include an increase in temperature, sea level, frequency and intensity of extreme weather, accompanied by a decrease in rainfall and an impact on biodiversity that has exacerbated water shortage and caused great harm to the productivity of the agricultural sector. Forest fires and the affiliated problem of transboundary

[57] For an overview of the heterogenic character of the whole East Asian region, see table 1 in the Appendix.
[58] Within the energy field there are discussions in ASEAN concerning an energy grid that would facilitate for renewable energy transfer within the South East Asian region, but according to two actors in Singapore, "this is far away".

haze have been problems that are likely to increase in frequency and severity in ASEAN (especially in Indonesia and neighboring countries) (Koh and Bhullar 2010: 3).

6.4.2 Political feasibility

Koh and Bhullar (2010: 5) claim that ASEAN has so far played a relatively small role in climate change governance. Climate Change is governed by "the ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Framework on Climate Change: Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry towards Food Security" (ASEAN 2009). This framework is currently in phase 1 of an implementation process. For now the framework focuses on adaptation primarily, and mitigation efforts are based on a sector-based approach through agricultural, fisheries, livestock, and forestry sectors. The framework is projected to evolve into a more comprehensive framework, that will also encompass energy, but it is argued that this will have to occur through "a phased-approach" (ASEAN 2009: 7). A co-benefits approach is advocated also in ASEAN, especially in linking climate change to biodiversity concerns as well as food security, issues that are both highly relevant challenges in the South East Asian region (ibid.).

An observer in Singapore argues that the South East Asian countries' interest in climate change cooperation appear to be most directed towards the global mechanisms for climate related funding. He argues that the emerging global green climate fund can "open up a lot of opportunities for developing countries to compete over the adaptation funding that is coming in the pipeline" (J). This might be a source of divergence within ASEAN, but it might also encourage ASEAN to form a united front on the global level, and promote capacity building for attracting such funding. The potential effect this may have for climate change governance in the region is not clear-cut:

> *You can look at that cynically and think that they're going to be putting round pegs into square holes, and just doing what they need to do and saying what they need to say to get the money, or you can look at it as a productive, proactive strategy. And I don't think those two are mutually exclusive (O_3 March 2012).*

6.5 Structural preconditions for effective cooperation

In the following, I will analyze the interest configuration of the East Asian actors to evaluate whether the preconditions for effective cooperation is present in the region today. These preconditions do not provide for precise predictions of whether cooperation will be successful

or not, but applying well-developed theoretical expectations to the empirical setting in East Asia, should provide a clearer image of general pathways that institutional reform may be guided by.

One of the main points to gather from the summaries of the different national interest constellations (as explored in the previous section) is that the relevant actors simply do not seem to want to cooperate with each other on traditional climate mitigation efforts at this stage. The CSIS survey of strategic elites of their views on regionalism also found that international institutions are preferred to regional ones in relation to climate change mitigation commitments (2009: vi). However, as many of the informants pointed to, all the countries are deeply engaged in transition efforts towards a low-carbon economy. This means that the fields of energy efficiency and technology innovation, as well as the development and employment of renewable energy, are interests that all countries in the region have an interest in advancing. For the industrialized countries of Japan and Korea, as well as China, economic restructuring is held as a high priority. Actors seem to be motivated by economic incentives that are external to the perspective of mitigating climate changes. In China, an observer answers the question on whether the Chinese governments see any opportunities in climate change, accordingly:

> *Yes, they definitely do. They take it as a chance to restructure the structure of the economy. They have wanted to do this for a very long time. The economy today demands too much resource. If you improve the industrial structure, then you will also get higher value and output from your production. (O_1 March 2012).*

These are the relevant interests for regional cooperation, and therefore, it can be argued that it is more relevant to focus on the interest configuration on these functional issues instead of the problem of climate change in general. This constitutes an inductive finding, and the coming analysis will based on this finding. This research strategy thus deviates from the deductive logic presented in the analytical approach (where the more general problem of climate change cooperation is in focus). However, a focus on practical fields for cooperation instead of traditional mitigation efforts is compatible with Victor's (2011) argument that, rather than to focus on outcomes that governments have limited ability to control anyway, one should direct attention to policy measures that pertains to activities causing the problem. In the following, I will therefore present technology innovation and implementation of renewable energy as convergent issues in the region. Further on, I will explore the configuration of the interest

regarding transition efforts to find whether these interests appear as malignant or benign problems, and further explore how the patterns of interdependence affects this configuration in general terms. Lastly, I will evaluate whether any actors have expressed signals of leadership ambition, and how the other countries in the region greet this.

6.5.1 Cooperation on transition efforts

Cooperation on technology innovation and renewable energy are unquestionably insufficient means to achieve the goal of mitigating climate changes. At the same time, a remainder of the importance of these two features for future reduction efforts might be in place. As the International Energy Agency (IEA 2011) projects that world energy demand will increase from 504.7 quadrillion Btu in 2008, to 769.8 quadrillion Btu in 2035, the production of technology for cleaner energy, as well as an gross expansion of the renewable energy industry needs to accelerate in a level unprecedented in history (IEA 2011). The average annual percent change on a global basis is in this period 1.6, but for non-OECD Asia this growth rate is 2.9%. In other words, this challenge is even more pressing in the East Asian region. Technology development is also crucial to the transition to low-carbon growth patterns because many of the rapidly industrializing countries in East Asia risk becoming locked-in to a carbon-intensive industrial structure if more energy efficient solutions are not readably accessible in this phase of development (O_2 March 2012). With China's average of 10% annual growth rate, it is strongly dependent on increased technology development.

Stronger cooperation on technology and renewable energy would benefit the East Asian countries in a number of ways. Ladislaw and Lakano (2011: 37) has pointed to the fact that the creation of "a market for clean energy technologies and services is not a zero sum game". This is apparent in the East Asian region. According to one observer (O_2 March 2012). China does not have core technology at this point and is therefore dependent on cooperating with other countries to access such technology. Japan on the other hand, exports technology to China and uses China as an assembly base for export to Western countries. Thus, despite these countries very different economic profiles, their interests on these issues are surprisingly convergent. Technology is in fact recognized by one observer, as a potential accelerator of regional integration if external conditions for Chinese trade shift way:

> *"Japan clearly has better technology than China. If the EU and US start to impose restrictions on import from China, than maybe this East Asian Community idea is more feasible." (O_1 March 2012).*

For Japan's side, this is an optimal situation, given their competitive advantage in technology for energy efficiency and renewable energy. As explained in previous section, Japan could potentially provide collective goods in the region. However, Japan has also recently been tormented by domestic troubles that may have subdued their willingness to contribute to the public good. An informant explains it this way:

> *"Although Japan had been a protagonist for this [ref. technology cooperation], the new Prime Minister does not seem so interested." (O_1 March 2012).*

Another one points to some logical reasons for this muted activity:

> *"Japan actually, compared with past, is much less active. It used to be promoting a lot. But after Fukushima, after financial crisis, Japan is very reluctant to do more. China and Korea are actually much more proactive than Japan is now." (A_1 March 2012).*

Korea is, on the other hand, perceived to be increasingly active in promoting green technology development. With green growth as a national strategy, and a committee for green growth on the highest national level, Korea is in fact considered by two of the observers to be more proactive on the issue of technology development and renewable energy than China. Korea has also actively been using UN ESCAP to promote green growth in the region, and according to an actor (A_1 March 2012), incorporates a regional perspective on its new green economic strategy.

The countries in ASEAN are, according to the actors in Singapore, also building up a green economy, but many emphasize that other countries must do the lions part with of the necessary efforts. As the recognized institution builder in the region, ASEAN has already provided the region with forums to facilitate for regional cooperation.

6.5.2 Problem structure

As argued above, there are a number of sound arguments for regional cooperation on climate related issues. On a general account, the central actors in the region appear to be displaying relatively converging interests in regards to economic factors. However, Wirth (EAF 2012) has pointed to a potential disparity between economic and political factors in the relations between East Asian countries. An analysis of the level of benignity or malignancy has to take both these factors into account. Consequentially, what emerges is a complex interest configuration that must be classified as mixed.

The problem of transition efforts (understood as development of technology and renewable energy), presents more characteristics of a benign problem type than the problem of climate change did. The malignancy of climate change cooperation may be circumscribed to a certain degree, because instead of focusing on environmental effects that are distant and uncertain, economic benefits are perceived as carrying potential immediate gains. China's newly conquered position in the solar energy sector is a good example of how a private good (a new growth sector) can coincide with a public good (solar energy at a lower price).

In order to clarify the differences between the problem of climate change and the problem of transition efforts, it may prove rewarding to reiterate a theoretical argument presented in chapter 3. A setting characterized by externalities could lead to incongruity between the individual rational choice and the collective optimum. However, such externalities might take multiple forms, and not all lead to a politically malignant configuration. Externalities may also be called external leaks, and refers to effects of one actors action on another actor, for which is not present in the former actor's own calculus (Underdal 2002:18). Negative externalities is a situation where "each producer's marginal cost will be less than the social marginal cost", and this will generally lead to overproduction in terms of what is socially optimal (ibid.). Put differently, with negative externalities, "all countries except the generation suffers" (Barrett 1990: 69). An example of this is the problem with haze in South East Asia, and depletion of shared resources is another. But externalities may also be positive.

Technology development for renewable energy and energy efficiency are characterized as situations of positive externalities, that will rather lead to undersupply compared to the socially optimal. If one actor makes innovative progress on technology, then that can be considered as a collective good that other actors are free to benefit from without having contributed to the process. In economic terms the situation can be explained as when the producer sets marginal benefits equal to marginal cost, the positive externalities will lead to a situation where the marginal benefit are less than the social marginal benefit (Barrett 2007). A rational actor will then produce less than what is socially optimal. Renewable energy and technology for clean and efficient energy are both undersupplied today both in East Asia and the world. By increasing the market scale and capitalize on synergistic relationships, you can limit externalities and avoid undersupply. The externalities of cooperation on technology development are also symmetrical because if technology advances, all parties can benefit

from increased productivity from energy efficient products. There are, in other words, potential absolute gains to be harvested. The essential task of cooperation is thus to incentivize actors to do *more.*

Increased competition may complicate economic interests that are relatively converging in principle. China, Japan and Korea are all heavily engaged in developing renewable energy and technology for clean energy. Although Bery (EAF 2011) concluded that China's emergence has complemented the regional activity matrix rather than challenged it by functioning as the final assembly for the regional production network, the CSIS (Pumphrey, Ladislaw 2010: 42) warned, in their report on East Asian regional cooperation on climate change, about the possibility of "green protectionism" in the growing market for green products in the East Asian region. It is difficult to project whether competition will dominate, now that these countries are all heavily investing in these industries, or whether they will seek to grasp the opportunities for economy-of-scale activities, but this is an important dimension for future developments in the region.

It is also important to mention, that although technology and renewable energy can be seen as converging issues in East Asia, structural changes in domestic industry structures may come at the dispense of other countries. Two observers mentioned that Korea and Japan have, during China's emergence, moved some of their energy-intensive industry to China as part of their transition efforts. Korea has moved much of its business in electronics and automobile production, while Japan moved its cement industry to China in (Mao). Currently, China is investing in the lower end of production in the ASEAN countries. Energy-intensive industries such as textile, paper and steel are mentioned as examples by the observer. In the end, the observer sees this as trade-offs.

> *You can say that climate benefits because Japanese industry is more energy efficient, but at the same time the production scale increases in China. So I'm not sure what the result becomes. (O_1 March 2012).*

The problem structure does not seem overwhelmingly malignant, but this statement should be qualified by saying that a market specific analysis should be done to document the inference properly. The function of the analysis presented above, was rather to present an overview over one of the most important driving forces behind the institutional complex in East Asia, namely the interest configuration. At this level of abstraction, there are some features that

appear to stand out. In regards to transition efforts, externalities are present, but they are largely positive and symmetrical. Competition does not seem to dominate at the moment, and by cooperating on the diffusion of technology and renewable energy (especially between China, Japan and Korea) synergistic relationships can be capitalized. However, the so-called green economy is increasing as a field for economic cooperation, and this so this factor may make the interest constellation more malignant in near future. In game theoretical terms, cooperating on technology and renewable energy, appear as a coordination game, where there are multiple pareto-optimal equilibriums, and the actors do not have diverging dominant strategies. This indicates that cooperation based on incentive corrections and centralized command and control may not be the essence of the cure for these issues in East Asia today.

6.5.3 Power distribution

Even if the problem that actors are facing can be deemed to be politically benign, it is not given that these actors will actually cooperate to advance their converging interests. Another factor that is considered as a precondition for effective cooperation is that the convergent issues serve the interests of the powerful actors in a given setting. This powerful actor or a coalition of actors should ideally also be acting as protagonists for strengthened cooperation. What becomes particularly relevant in the East Asian case, given the emerging stage of the institutional complex, is whether the powerful actors are advocating change or have a preference for status quo. I will in the following explore these dimensions in the case of East Asia.

One of the most central debates in international relations theory is that over the concept of power. One of the most trusted datasets with indicators of power measured in absolute terms is the Correlates of War (COW 2012) dataset produced by David J. Singer et. al (2007). The most commonly used indicator for measuring national capability in this dataset, is the Composite Index of National Capability (CINC), which adds up different components of power such as iron and steel production, military expenditures, military personnel, total national energy consumption, total population and urban population. If we use the realist perspective and apply the indicators from COW on the case of East Asia, we find an unambiguous picture. According to the CINC (2012), China comes out with a score of 0.199, whereas Japan receives a score of 0.043 and Korea lands on a 0.024. In ASEAN, Indonesia

comes out on top with 0.014 and Laos receives a mere 0.0005 (see table). In terms of absolute power there is hence no way to question China's regional dominant role.

On the climate change issue area, environmental economists usually assume that issue specific power stem from a country's vulnerability for climate changes as well as their marginal cost of abatement measures (Victor 2006). In this thesis, political feasibility has replaced cost of mitigation. Victor (2006) also followed this procedure. However, both absolute power capabilities as well as issue specific power are factors that can be measured in absolute terms. When we talk about the potential for intergovernmental cooperation, it would be strange to ignore the relative aspect of power. Liberalists most often advocate patterns of interdependence as the most functional source of power that states can mobilize to gain influence.

6.5.4 Patterns of interdependence in East Asia

Patterns of interdependence may serve to modify patterns of dominance according to absolute power. Keohane and Nye (1987) argued, from a neo-liberalist point of view, that in relations of "complex interdependence", power cannot necessarily be projected through the use of military capabilities. The climate change issue area is a prominent example of a field where the military have limited relevance. This does not mean that patterns of interdependence has made absolute power obsolete, but where complex interdependence can be traced, then "patterns of interdependence and patterns of potential power resources in a given issue area are two sides of the same coin" (Keohane and Nye 1987: 730). They claim that asymmetrical interdependence is the most accessible source through which an actor can convert power into influence (Keohane and Nye 1987: 728).

When applying this perspective to analyze the East Asian relations, then the picture becomes less clear-cut than the one presented above. China is restrained on a number of accounts from converting its overwhelming power capabilities into regional dominance. As is both expressed in the literature (Katzenstein 1997) and by many of the informants, the patterns of interdependence in the region, are already strong. However, as I will argue in the following, economic relations are still asymmetrical and Japan and China plays unique roles in the matrix. A further complicating aspect is that economic and political aspects of the regional relations may not point in the same direction. The argument above showed how absolute

gains may be capitalized by cooperation in the region, but in the following I will discuss how the region is politically still hampered by historical tension and a lack of trust. The American influence in the region also serves as a complicating factor for East Asian cooperation. First, I will sketch out the patterns of economic interaction, before I try to untangle the most relevant political impediments to deepened cooperation.

One informant provides some general observations on the production networks in East Asia in this way:

> *Actually, East Asia has already become an integrated, one part. South East Asian countries provide raw material and small parts to china. China resembles them, and exports them to other parts of the world. This is the supply chain that makes them integrated. (O_2 March 2012).*

Another observer describes the interdependence between China, Japan, and Korea in this way:

> *"Japan used to be a large investor in research for technology in China (?). Korea supplies Japans industry. China is an important supplier of raw materials and agriculture to Japan and Korea" (O_1 March 2012).*

It is especially through trade that economic integration has expanded during the last decade. East Asia has over the last two decades implemented more preferential trade agreements (PTA's) than any other region in world (Hale, EAF 2010). The explosive growth in FTA's in the region the last years can be seen as an expression of how the economic interaction patterns are growing strong (Kawai, Wignaraja 2010). The former enemies China and Japan have also developed strong economic interdependence. China is Japan's biggest export destination, while Japan is number three for China (after US and Hong Kong) (CIA Factbook 2012). Together they form the third-largest bilateral economic relationship in the world (Drysdale 2012). However, Athukorala (2010) argues that because economic integration studies normally look at only the import-export ratio to study trade patterns, a misleading image of East Asia appears. In fact, he claims that there is a notable asymmetry in the trade integration in East Asia. In 2006/7, 55% of total manufacturing trade was intra-regional in East Asia (a figure higher than in NAFTA and close to the level in EU). Yet, the role of China as an assembly center for parts and components into products that are destined predominantly for countries in EU or NAFTA creates an asymmetric relation. Japan has also used the region as an assembly base primarily for export to the rest of the world. Figures show how intra-regional imports have increased dramatically over the last decade, while intra-regional exports have been consistently slower (Athukorala 2010: 14). Thus, on a general account, trade

relations between North and South East Asia remain asymmetrical, and export to other regions remains essential to the East Asian countries.

While taking this precautionary note on the level of economic integration into account, it remains that economic trade and integration has been a driver for economic growth in the region (Dysdale, EAF 2012). A number of scholars argue that this has happened despite of the politically strained relationships between countries in the region[59]. Wirth (EAF, 2012) even argues that there is a contradiction between economic and political relations in the East Asian region, and points to the fact that while the economic relations seem better than ever in East Asia, a recently published survey of international arms transfers by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, surprisingly showed that India, South Korea, China, Pakistan and Singapore where the world's five largest importers of conventional weapons between 2007 and 2011 (ibid). Without moving further into the realms of security, these numbers may remind us that although rational interests for economic gains may point in one direction, political impediments and historical ties may point in the opposite. A politically central Chinese informant recognizes that although the South East Asian countries benefit tremendously economic from China's rise, the historical and political dimension may make them uncomfortable with the development. Also, the Cold War is not too long ago:

> *As we know that maybe ten years ago there is very famous saying that China is a great threat to the region, especially the South East Asian countries. [..] And of course you see that China, we can understand that. We will never make aggressive gestures to our neighbors, and it is proven in history. But we can also understand as our small neighbors – you cannot really trust your so powerful neighbor. It's really understandable. (A_2 March 2012).*

Politically China and Japan still have a complicated relationship. As described in chapter 5, the two giants do not seem to have resolved historical tension, and diplomatically the relationship appears to have its up and downs. One informant sees the troublesome relationship as a hinder for deeper cooperation in the region:

> *Japan and china I think, of course they have this kind of competition. There can only be one number one in this region. And they do not have the political trust for historical reasons. So most of the initiatives proposed by Japan, will not be welcomed by **C**hina (O_2 March 2012).*

According to the same observer, China is the one controlling the situation:

[59] See Drysdale (EAF 2012), Wirth (EAF 2012)

Today it seems like Japan is more dependent upon China's economy than China is on Japan. So that is why I think that Japan will not insist on any occasion in terms of regionalization (O_2 March 2012).

The "peaceful rise" paradigm has been central to Chinese foreign policy during the previous years. Different informants emphasize this feature both in relation to the South East Asian countries and the relationship between China and Japan. The government representative for Chinese authorities that expressed sympathies over South East Asian fears concerning China's rise, argues that cooperation has lessened these fears over the last years, and emphasizes that China will continue to pursue cooperative arrangements to reassure the neighboring countries of their peaceful intentions. This strategy of cooperation with the South East Asian is called "good neighbors, also good friends or good brothers". (A_2 March 2012). As has been mentioned several times, internal affairs seem most important to China at this stage, and their external policy seem to reflect this. Functional cooperation is viewed as a way to build mutual trust and reassure neighboring countries that the rise of China will not jeopardize regional security.

I think that the responsibility lies in China. China should make softer gestures, more friendly gestures to our neighbors, not only economic, but culture, social and of course political and security, to build real understanding and real trust between the neighbors. (A_2 March 2012).

Their perspective on the relationship with Japan follows the same line of thinking, according to an outside observer:

What the Chinese do not want is an unstable relationship with the Japan that would distract it from its primary goal, which is keeping economic prosperity going. Keep ensuring that China has the necessary peaceful surroundings to allow them to focus on internal affairs (O_4 March 2012).

To sum up, a relevant question could be whether the economic or the political dimension dominates the relations in the region. Drysdale (EAF, 2012) argues that the tremendous economic relationship has now exceeded the impediments of unresolved historical issues and political rivalry between China and Japan. A realist, arguing that issues pertaining to security will always trump economic considerations, would essentially challenge this inference. Zhang Yunling (2004) argues perhaps more moderately that there are still specific issues remaining in the region, but none that are fundamental in the sense of dividing the region in the way that happened during the Cold War. He sees this as a positive signal for the future of regional cooperation and integration. Related to China's foreign policy, Suisheng Zhao (2005) argues that China has so far practiced a foreign policy based on "pragmatic nationalism tempered by diplomatic prudence" (Zhao 2005). She argues that the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP)

primary international goal is to avoid confrontations with the Western actors that they depend on in the struggle to modernize their economy (ibid.). In general terms, one could infer that Chinese nationalism is directed inwards and pragmatism is directed outwards. One of the outside observers seems to be in line with the reasoning over a pragmatic foreign policy:

> *"..So to the extent to which the Chinese have a grand strategy at this point of time in the regional dimension, it is certainly keeping everything smooth, keep bilateral relationships smooth with the Americans and the Japanese, so that they can focus on what's at the heart of their concerns (O_4 March 2012).*

6.5.5 Leadership

Empirical findings suggest that instrumental leadership facilitates for formation and implementation of a regime. The more skill and energy the leader provides, the higher is the likelihood that an effective regime will be established. Underdal (2002:462) furthermore found that the need for instrumental leadership increases with problem malignancy, but this is also when it is most difficult to provide. When a problem is moderately malignant instrumental leadership is most likely to succeed. For environmental issues, it is also relevant whether power is located in the hands of the pushers or in the hands of the laggards (Underdal 2002:461). The former most often lead to effective regimes, while the latter seems to impede progress.

With its tremendous power capabilities and influence in the region, China is the natural place to look for leadership. However, the national five-year plan does not spend much time deliberating on China's external strategies (…)**.** A number of the informants also expressed that however concerned China is with the transfer to a green economy, they are not prepared to meet demands for leadership on this issue as of today.

> *"When we talk about climate I would say that China is not actively pursuing to be a leader. We still have many important internal issues in China. We have a very unbalanced growth in this country. Some regions are very bad off." (O_1 March 2012).*

Another actor from China points to a strategic limitation to China's opportunity to execute leadership in the region, namely that the US is wary of moves from China that could limit their own influence in the region.

> *"I think at present it is very difficult to say that China can make leadership. Because you see that, in fact China of course want to make real East Asian cooperation, but now I think it is more and more*

difficult to do that. Because that you know that the Obama administration, they say that" we came back to Asia", and especially South East Asia, but I think that, in fact the US (...) The Americans never left." (A_2 March 2012).

Japan and Korea both express, in their national strategic plans, an intention to become a leader of the low-carbon growth paradigm in the region.[60] Two of the informants concur that these countries seem to be pursuing an ambitious policy trajectory in this sense. However, one could say that both face limitations to their ability to project real leadership in the region. Concerning Japan, many of the informants appear to express a type of disappointment with the Japanese willingness to live up to its own aspirations of regional leadership.

"They believe is that they [ref. Japan] will get their act together and play a more visible role in providing some form of leadership to the region. I think that there is a bit of frustration in the rest of the region in regards to the Japanese." (O_4 March 2012).

This observer emphasizes that the region do not want Japanese leadership that will "rock the boat" with China, but rather a productive source for collective action (O_4 March 2012). External limitations are clearly their complicated regional history with important actors in the region (China, Korea, etc.), and also their difficult strategic challenge of balancing the priorities of the American alliance with the increasingly important trade relation with China.
Korea is at the beginning of their so-called "green revolution". As of today it is therefore difficult to speculate over what their role within this issue are will be in the future. Their ambitious five year plan may place them as a frontrunner, but the lack of influence in the region today, will make it difficult for them to project real leadership on this issue or other. The national strategic plan also refers to the role as a frontrunner rather than as a leader on "green development" as of today.

ASEAN is the recognized initiator of regionalization efforts in the region. The principle of "ASEAN-centrality" has not been openly disputed yet. However, ASEAN will remain a small player in the region. An observer comments on some apparent features of China's strategy regarding ASEAN leadership:

"China wants to dominate the whole process. However, China does not want others to think it's dominating others. That's why it wants minor players like ASEAN to lead, it's neutral and minor, to sit in the driving seat to drive the process. China in the backseat. This is China's basic strategy" (O_2 March 2012).

[60] See Government of Japan (2007) and Presidential Commission on Green Growth, Republic of Korea (2008)

It is also relevant to note that in regards to either technology or renewable energy, ASEAN has few ways of contributing.

The theoretical literature argues that it is not necessarily the same type of leadership that is requested in dealing with different problem structures. Previously, I have argued that the problems of technology and renewable energy cooperation appear to be moderately malignant due to competition between the parties. One of the hypotheses put forth in Underdal (2002: 461) is that in dealing with malign problems – particularly those characterized by severe asymmetry and cumulative conflicts – concentration in the hands of pushers tends to generate fear and withdrawal among laggards. For such problems, the most conductive distribution of power is likely to be one in which the aggregate strength of pushers is roughly balanced by the aggregate strength of intermediaries, with laggards in weaker positions, but not completely marginalized.

In different cooperative arrangements, all the countries in the region put great emphasis on sovereignty. This makes it difficult for any country to push for deep cooperation. Now that the Obama administration have "returned to Asia", China is further exercising power in order to push in this direction. One Chinese actor said: "So basically China won't make a competition over the US in this region. That's not in the strategic interest of China". If traditional US allies in the region begin to feel threatened, it is not unlikely that these countries will lean more heavy on their old ally in the years to come. China appears to be playing the game with this in sight. One observer described China's current strategy in a way that might sum up the discussion on leadership in regional cooperative structure:

> *"They (China) are clearly not prepared to play the role of public goods provider as the Americans are doing, that's clearly not the case." (O_4 March 2012).*

This chapter sought to answer the intermediate research question: *What characterizes the driving forces of interest, power and leadership, behind the institutional complex in East Asia?* The general image that emerges from the account presented above is that relations are complex in the sense that tension remains, and so-called power politics plays a central role, but yet there are many indications that pragmatism is in fact an essential factor in the relations between the East Asian countries.

An observer in Singapore displays it this way:

> *So I think the practical need is more powerful than everything. I believe that if the governments of CJK [China, Japan, ROK] can behave rational, they are capable of very good commitment to cooperation between them (O_4 March 2012).*

7 The regional architecture and climate change

The second part of the analysis in this thesis is centered on the institutional interaction between the three most important multilateral institutions in East Asia, namely ASEAN, APT and EAS. The chapter advance in two steps; first I evaluate the different features of the fragmented governance structure in East Asia in order to get a holistic understanding of what fragmentation means in this context, and thus probe into the promises and pitfalls of this structure. Second part of the analysis uses Stokke's (2011) framework for analyzing how different governance tasks that each institution may specialize in, may contribute to the overall effectiveness in an institutional complex. In doing this, I seek to analyze whether the institutions appear to interact through mechanisms that Stokke (2011) refers to as pathways to synergistic interaction.

Understanding and classifying the degree of fragmentation in an institutional complex is essential to be able to understand the eventual effect of the institutional complex on a given governance task. Furthermore, Gehring and Stokke (2011) argue that such a classification of empirical cases will help advance institutional interaction theory, given that the concepts are relatively underdeveloped at this stage of theoretical development. East Asia presents a complex institutional setting where narrow fields of operations are chosen to perform specific governance tasks (SIIA). The region has been accused of being "underinstitutionalized" with reference to the European and the North American experience with regional integration processes (Gill and Green 2009:12). However, Rodolfo Severino, former general secretary of ASEAN, posed the infamous rhetorical question, when pointing to what he saw as unfair expectations towards East Asia as a region: "why must a woman be like a man?" (O_6 March 2012).

One important finding from Chapter 5, that should be carried on into this part of the analysis, is that some of the issues highest on the regional agenda are not necessarily directly placed under "the climate change banner", but may nonetheless have a significant impact on the potential for future low carbon growth patterns. The analysis in this chapter will therefore

continue to relate to the preconditions for cooperating on efforts relating to a transition to low carbon growth patterns.

7.1 Categorizing the degree of fragmentation

It is a challenging task to create exhaustive categories for degree of integration or fragmentation. In East Asia, there is, as described in Chapter 4, a multiplicity of institutional arrangements that often overlap in terms of both membership and issue area (e.g. ASEAN+3, EAS, APEC). An observer in Singapore argues that the structure is clearly fragmented. The most common ways of cooperating is to choose specific and narrow fields from cooperation and then work from there. The arrangements will be restricted in membership to some extent, but more importantly it is restricted to a specific focus that can later be ramped up if this is found necessary (O_5 March 2012). Zhang Yunling was the Chair of the East Asia Vision Group (EAVG), and he confirms this perspective by saying that the strategy for institution building has been a building block approach (Yunling 2004). The development of East Asian cooperation has been more informed by economic needs than by "a well-designed political goal" (Yunling 2005: 5).

As discussed in the analytical approach, the fragmented structure for cooperation in East Asia can be evaluated to see how it fits into the classifications provided by Biermann et.al (2009). They claim that fragmented structures can be classified as: synergistic, cooperative or conflictive. The three categories that the classification is based on refer to, what degree of institutional integration is present, to what degree norms conflict or converge, and finally what type of actor constellation is present (meaning here: which institutions do relevant actors support). These categories can be said to indicate the frames for cooperation, but they do not indicate substantive content regarding the *form* of cooperation. Below I present three categories that are compatible with Biermann et.al.'s (2009) categories, but that aspires to capture more of the content of cooperation in East Asia. The concepts advanced here are based on inductive findings from interviews with key informants in the region. The three concepts are: informality, complexity, and instrumentality. Hopefully, these categories can be used to illuminate the promises and pitfalls of the institutional complex in East Asia.

Complexity

Cha (2011: 113) argues that: "Complexity is a critical component of the pluralistic architecture in Asia". The structure of integration is in principle compatible with Biermann et.al.'s (2009) category; cooperative structure, because ASEAN functions as a formal core institution, and other institutions are loosely integrated. However, such a static and simplified description of the structure in East Asia is problematic. In chapter 5, I described the web of multilateral, and bilateral institutions operating at multiple levels of governance. Yet the complex "snapshot" of the institutional map of the region does neither capture the fluidity of the structure. Institutions come to life and are cut off in the while they are still in their formative state.[61] Pempel (2010: 209) described the situation as "institutional Darwinism".

An interesting question that come to mind under the rubric of institutional complexity, is who benefits from this complexity? Drezner (2007: 4) warns against the inequity of institutional complexity by arguing that it is the powerful actors who are able to navigate their interests through this type of structure, because those are the ones that have the necessary capabilities to do this. With high levels of complexity, he argues that governance structures go from producing rule-based outcomes over to producing power-based outcomes. This argument finds little support in the analysis of institutional complexity in East Asia. A Chinese member of the East Asian Vision group, explains in interview, how China has consistently "searched for an integrated approach" to integration in East Asia (A_3 March 2012), and another Chinese actor engaged in the central administration, argues that "we really do not want the spaghetti bowl of institutions" (A_2 March 2012). From the Singaporean side, the perspective presented from the informants is different. Here it is argued by an observer (O_4 March 2012). that it is in ASEAN interests to keep the structure "messy" in order to stay in control of the integration process. He describes how ASEAN has kept producing institutions in order to lock the powerful countries in to a structure they initiate:

> *So in that regard, I think that what ASEAN unfortunately has had to do is to ensure that you get a long term buy in by regional powers and great powers. Because of its failure and weaknesses of its institutions it has had to keep producing new institutions to keep the commitment and the buy-in going.*

[61] The Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate may serve as an example. Lauched as a potential alternative to the Kyoto Protocol, yet after five years of operation (2006-2011) it was closed down. (APP, 2012). It should, however, be notet that this was an American-led initiative, and the formal conclusion of this arrangement might have be explained by a shift in American leadership, rather than be ascribed to the structure of cooperation in East Asia. Many inititative have failed to materialize. The East Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC) was lauched, but never materialized (ASEAN 2009).

It's a bit of an ironic and hilarious approach to the region. Keep building things to lock in the commitments of great powers. But how long can this last? It comes a point of time where you just say: okay let's just stop this nonsense. Let's stop it, and ensure that the existing frameworks and arrangements that you actually have are effective, efficacious, and that's what you need." (O_4 March 2012).

Informality

Formal institutions in North East Asia have not fared well so far. According to Cha (2011:103), they have been "spectacularly unsuccessful". In this part of the region, he argues that a focus on structure instead of the functional purpose is "wasted energy" (ibid). There are sound reasons behind the logic that negotiations on the formal aspects of institution building is more difficult than addressing the specific governance task at hand. As described in Chapter 4, the complicated relations between China, Japan and Korea have not been fully resolved, and tension still remains. From Chapter 5, we can gather that China's policy towards their neighbors are guided by pragmatic considerations, and their primary concern seem to be that external relations remain peaceful and conducive for a continued focus on internal affairs. Cooperating on functional issues is seen as an instrument to build up confidence and trust between the neighbors, but also to solve specific challenges that relate to the supra-national level. If negotiations center on the formal aspects of institution building, such as building capacity to enforce participation and compliance, this is likely to raise issues with symbolic leverage that invokes the frictions that still remain between the parties in the region. The issue of sovereignty has a distinct status in the foreign policy rhetoric, particularly present in China. The political restraints against committing to supra-national arrangements are present in many countries in the region. A legal scholar in Singapore points to the fact that even the most institutionalized arrangement in the region, ASEAN, is guided by a Blueprint for the three coming years that is no more than "a very beautiful scenario" (O_6 March 2012). According to this informant there was a very strong political will to institutionalize ASEAN with more legally binding rules, but they have so far not been able to agree on a specific Roadmap that commits the parties to this regional entity.

The informality of regional entities can be interpreted both as a promise and a pitfall for effective governance in the region. Breitmeier et.al (2011) found that formal regimes are *not* more effective in terms of problem-solving capacity. Victor (2011) has on his side argued that one of the flaws of the Kyoto Protocol is their choice to opt for legally binding commitments.

Young (2002) advocated the need for flexible mechanisms for successfully governing environmental problems that we do not fully understand, and that have a rapidly shifting nature. Cha (2011:113) argues that the informal structures in East Asia *are* more adaptable to change and institutional innovation. ASEAN is the only institution in the region based on a Charter (although this is also non-binding), and so a shift in strategy is not a demanding process. One actor from Chinese central administrations discusses the distinct advantages that this informality may provide for the region. As last Chapter discussed, there is a great diversity between the countries in the region both in terms level of development and political systems, and the informant argues that this diversity is better taken care of by informal rules that puts little emphasis on enforcement. Building consensus is the core of "the ASEAN way"[62]. However, Victor (2010: 239) does note that:

> *"A non-binding system focused in complex policies and measures work only when it is married to sophisticated institutions that can check up on whether each country is honoring its promises and whether the effort, in total, is adequate"*

In light of this argument, it may seem problematic that ASEAN, as the central component in the regional institutional complex (although it does not "define the region" as Cha (2011:102) argues), can hardly be deemed "a sophisticated institution". The ASEAN Charter that came into force in 2008 puts clear limitations on the authority delegated to the institution. "Respect for independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity" is the first of the Charter's foundational principles (ASEAN Charter 2007). One of the observers also note that visiting the ASEAN secretariat is "an underwhelming experience", and that the level of funding delegated to the secretariat is not adequate for the institution to be able to respond to the ambitions put forth by the ASEAN Charter (2007) and the Blueprint (2008-2015). This weakness may affect the potential for wider East Asian region because of the institutional linkage to other institutional arrangements in the region. In this regard, Yunling (2004) argues that: ASEAN needs to be strong, of there is any chance for APT to grow strong. Two other informants envision that the "ASEAN way" of cooperating will face a bottleneck in the future. Today, other institutions than ASEAN, function more as forums for exchange of policy positions and joint deliberations, than platforms for collective action. One informant sees this as a stage in the development of regional cooperation: "There are different stages, but one day we have to commit to cooperation" (A_2 March 2012).

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[62] Koh and Robinson (2002: 4) claim that the three foundational norms of "the ASEAN way" are: Non-interference, consensus building and preference for national implementation".

Instrumentality

Regional experts, especially those anchored in the constructivist literature, have argued that there is a low normative commitment to regional cooperation in the region.[63] The survey of Asian strategic elites, produced by the CSIS (2010), showed that although there is wide adherence to the *principle* of an East Asian Community, when specific questions are addressed, the national and international solutions are preferred. An observer in Singapore sees no normative foundation for institution building in the region today:

> *"Again, this goes back to the instrumentality, the utilitarian approach. And with that you know, whatever helps me to advance my national interest that's the institution de jour that I will go for, the next day perhaps something totally different. That still seems to be at heart of the way the region behaves" (O_4 March 2012).*

The concept of instrumentality is perhaps another way to address the phenomenon of forum shopping. As discussed in chapter 2, forum shopping refers to "the strategic selection of favorable venues from a menu of alternative governance arrangements, but also withdrawal from old and creation of new arrangements" (Papa 2008:1). The concept of forum shopping has an unfavorable connotation, but it this might be a misinterpretation of the phenomenon. Such behavior may in fact accelerate cooperation by allowing parties who are eager to solve a specific task come together, and sideline the laggards on a given issue, without raising protests from the excluded part, as there are still many forums for them to cooperate within. China is currently not invited to join the TTP – the FTA proposed by the US, but has not made much furor over this (Drysdale, EAF 2011). Also, pushers for a given policy can by engaging in forum shopping behavior, "test" their ability to have an impact on pushing policies, within different forums, and forum shopping may thus represent a potential contribution to effectiveness instead of an impediment.

7.2 Institutional effectiveness

As discussed in the introduction, when we are to analyze the potential for effectiveness of a given institutional complex, the micro question of effectiveness related to each institution becomes: How can each institution maximize its contribution to the overall governance system with the aim of mitigating or solving a problem of environmental governance? In order to analyze this dimension, Stokke's (2011) framework for governance niches and

[63] See: Pempel (2010), Acharya and Stubbs (2006)

mechanisms for interplay management will be applied to the East Asian institutional complex. The following analysis will be restricted to the ASEAN+ institutions (namely ASEAN, APT/ASEAN+3, and EAS[64]), and they will be evaluated according to what governance tasks they focus on, and whether these functions serve to trigger the mechanisms related to supportive interaction between them. The analysis has been restricted to these three institutions in order to reduce the complexity to a manageable degree. When the governance contributions of each institution is analyzed, I will return to the overall structure and discuss whether a fragmented governance structure is compatible with the problem of climate change.

7.3 Effective niche selection to overall effectiveness

If one institution is constructed and operated so that is performs a governance task that links to other institutions in a synergic fashion, this might represent a contribution to governance effectiveness because one institution is then strengthened by another. Stokke's (2011) framework embarks from the categorization of four governance tasks, namely knowledge-building, norm building, capacity building and enforcement. He presents three mechanisms that may support synergistic interaction, namely cognitive, normative and utilitarian. Cognitive interaction refers to a situation where a given institution raise awareness on a subject, and that the members of other forums, therefore, understand the problem better. Normative interaction refers to the perceptions of right conduct, and situations where one institution makes certain norms more compelling. The given institution thus activates the "logic of appropriateness". Utilitarian interaction refers to when one institution alters the incentive structure for another, and by that activates the "logic of consequentiality" (Stokke 2011: 146).

I will in the following scrutinize the ASEAN+ institutions to map out which governance tasks they have chosen, and evaluate whether they seemingly trigger the mechanisms for effective governance within the institutional complex or it they affect each other in a disruptive way. Statements and declarations will be used as material that may shed light on the output of the three institutions in question regarding the issue of climate change. [65]

[64] The economic cooperative arrangement under the EAS is called ASEAN+6/CEPEA (Yunling, Minghui 2011).

[65] For ASEAN, the "ASEAN Declaration on Environmental Sustainability" (2007), "ASEAN Declaration on the 13th Session of the Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC, as well as the "ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint" (Section D10 on Responding to Climate Change and Addressing Its Impacts) will be used

Knowledge building

An institution that focuses on knowledge building as a governance task may contribute to overall effectiveness if they produce knowledge that is *credible, legitimate* and/or *salient.* Institutions focusing on knowledge building produce scientific input to policy making (Stokke 2011: 147). ASEAN has institutionalized working groups within the different issue areas working to produce policies within their respective areas, but these do not have scientific status.[66] ASEAN's main contribution to knowledge building on the environmental field is their "State of the Environment" which is published every three years (ASEAN State of the Environment 2009), but this is neither a scientific endeavor. The two other institutions in question functions primarily as platforms for diffusion of policies, and do not classify as knowledge-building institutions in Stokke's (2011) understanding of the term.[67]

Norm building

Stokke's (2011) category of norm building is more relevant for the East Asian institutions. If the norms produced, firstly are *applicable* – meaning that they are in coherence with other relevant norms, and that they determine precisely what is expected of actor behavior, secondly provide *coverage* – meaning that they involve the most important actors for a given governance problem, and thirdly that they are *substantially strong* – meaning that the normative commitments that states make may contribute substantially to solving the given problem, they may trigger mechanisms for effective governance.

Scholars focusing on norm building in the East Asian region, emphasize first and foremost, the norm of building an East Asian Community.[68] ASEAN is recognized as the "institution builder" in the region, and therefore the primary driver of this norm diffusion regarding the East Asian Community. Sound arguments may support that they have occupied this role with a certain amount of success.

(finn dato). For ASEAN+3, the relevant document is the "ASEAN PLUS THREE Cooperation Work Plan 2007-2017" - Section C: Energy, Environment, Climate Change And Sustainable Development Cooperation (2007). Finally, in regards to the EAS the relevant document is the "Singapore Declaration on Climate Change, Energy and the Environment" (2007).

[66] For climate change the relevant working group is the AWGCC.

[67] One exception to this may be mentioned: the Haze Regional Action Plan of ASEAN. This arrangement is directed towards monitoring developments and produce credible, legitimate knowledge on forest fires. However, it relates to a local problem of forest fires particularly in Indonesia, and the information that this institution provides, is therefore not directly salient for the wider East Asian region.

[68] See Acharya (2004)

Stokke's (2011) first criterion of coverage seems fulfilled. As ASEAN has created new institutions, they have successfully engaged more and more actors to be included in a potential East Asian Community, and must in that way be said to have increased coverage of the norm of regionalism. With the last additions of the US and Russia to the EAS, at least one institution in the region now include membership of the most relevant target states. An observer argues what seems to have been the leading motivation for ASEAN institution building is ensuring "a buy-in by regional powers and great powers" by producing new institutions that would "lock in the commitments of great powers" (O_4 March 2012).

The criterion of applicability is, however, only moderately fulfilled. ASEAN sees building the East Asian Community as a building block process, where the ASEAN countries needs to strengthen its internal commitments to regional governance before the "Community" may emerge. In the wider East Asian region, there is already wide support for the concept of such a community, although there is less convergence on how the specific characteristics of the community are supposed to look like (CSIS 2009). Institution building has followed the (now thoroughly described) "ASEAN way" that emphasizes sovereignty and focus on consensus building. In this Acharya (2004) claims that "norm-entrepreneurs" has assimilated the Western understanding of regional organization with the East Asia ideal, and that they thus have successfully made community building applicable to the other norms valued in the region, such as the narrow definition of sovereignty (Acharya 2004: 249).[69] The building block-approach may be traced to The APT Work plan 2007-2017, which states that it "shall also support the establishment of the ASEAN Community by 2015", and that "there cannot be a strong East Asian Community without a strong ASEAN" (APT 2007:1). The other dimension of applicability that related to precise specification seems less upheld. The specific content of the East Asian Community is still disputed.[70] If a consensus on an East Asian Community would emerge, it is unlikely to be built upon binding norms of cooperation (A_2 March 2012, O_6 March 2012). Furthermore, the reporting and review procedures are limited at this point of time and there is therefore little possibility of ASEAN to assess different countries implementation of regional solutions. These factors limit the applicability of the norm of community building, as done currently by ASEAN.

[69] Capie (2010: 293) discusses Acharya's argument that so-called track II institutions in East Asia (e.g. ASEAN-Institutes of Strategic and International Studies ASEAN-ISIS) have "reframed and redefine norms to make them more acceptable at the regional level". Capie (2010) argue that such norm entrepreneurs have not had a significant effect on institution building in East Asia.

[70] Findings by the CSIS (2009: 20) present clearly that there is no consensus on membership.

The normative strength of community building must be evaluated in regards to the specific tasks that regional institutions embark upon. In this regard, it may be relevant to bring to mind Underdals (2004:110) warning that effective governance should always be evaluated in regards to specific governance problems. I have related to the "meta-norm" of community building instead, because this is the most central theme in the literature on norm-based interaction in the region.[71] Furthermore, it can be argued that at this point of time, the constellation of institutions and their respective features are to a large degree unsettled, and thus achieving consensus on the content of regionalism (understood here as consistent with the concept of community building) is thus a precondition for deepened cooperation in the future. On a general account, as discussed in previous chapter, asymmetrical interests between North East Asia and South East Asia characterize economic activity in the region, and this may limit the potential for deep regional collaboration within the wider East Asian region.

Capacity building

Stokke (2011:161) finds that institutions aiming for the capacity building niche should incorporate members that have different capabilities in technology relevant to solve the problem. This will enable capacity building through providing *models.* Incorporating structural features for transfer of policies, may serve to strengthen *commitments*. If an institution manages to fuse a specific problem with a wider concern, this may strengthen capacity by raising *funds,* often by integrating a specific governance issue into a broader concern.

A feature that places these institutions well to occupy the capacity building niche is that there is a great technological asymmetry between the countries involved in all institutions.[72] This fact enables some countries to act as *models* for others and by that potentially diffusing efficient technology to wider areas. Both Japan and Korea states their ambition to act as role models for other countries in the region in their national strategic plans, and both the APT and the EAS may function as platforms for these activities (Japanese plan, Korean plan).

[71] See Acharya (2004)
[72] In ASEAN, Singapore holds a role as technological frontrunner, and in APT and EAS, Japan, US are clearly strong frontrunners.

Diffusion of technology for clean energy within one institution raises the national capacity for low carbon growth in a given country, than that enables this country to live up to commitments in another institution. Thus interplay may *raise the level of commitment* in the overall governance structure. Stokke (2011) argues that collaborative structures for "defining and implementing practical problem solving projects" facilitate for technology transfer and raise commitments. All three institutions advocate their role in defining the issue of low carbon growth, and more specific policies for achieving this end, but all rely on strictly domestic implementation of common agendas. The regional institutions role in raising commitment is therefore partly fulfilled.

A last feature that makes the three institutions able to contribute to capacity development is the role they play in linking local issues to the global issue of climate change. Stokke (2011) claims that institutions that are able to link one issue to broader issues may contribute to capacity building by *raising funds* for the governance task at hand. All institutions appear to have contributed to connecting national development concerns to the salient global issue of climate change mitigation or adaptation. One observer notes that a theme that is currently high on the South East Asian regional agenda is how countries "can go through the appropriate channels to access the funding for adaptation measures". However, three other informants argue that these forums are presently functioning as forums for the exchange of policies and ideas, and do not possess structural features other than the ability to function as a platform at this stage (O_3 March 2012, O_2 March 2012 and A_2 March 2012).

Enforcement

ASEAN is the only institution in the region with a dispute settlement mechanism, but this has never been utilized by the member states (Center for International Law, NUS 2012).[73] As the two other institutions are based on soft law (ASEAN only has two hard law agreements), the institutions do not occupy the enforcement governance niche.

[73] The 2004 Protocol for Enhanced Dispute Settlement Mechanism (EDSM)

7.4 Signs of disruptive interaction – institution as strategic tools?

Strange (1982) has accused regime theory for focusing too much on harmonious features of reality and neglecting the more potent situations of conflict or disruption. With the focus thus far on pathways to synergistic interaction, this thesis might be in risk portraying the general image in a too optimistic manner. Given that the research question focuses on the potential for effective governance, potential synergic (as opposed to disruptive) relationships between the institutions in the institutional complex has been in focus. In previous section it became clear that particularly within the governance tasks of norm building and capacity building, the three institutions in East Asia function, to a certain extent, in a mutually supportive manner, and they may collectively contribute positively to the overall governance effectiveness in regards to climate related governance.

After having dived into the specific governance tasks, and the associated mechanisms they operate through, it may be time to raise the gaze. There is no clear division of labor between the institutions in place[74]. Although there may be potentially effective features, political impediments may function as stumbling block towards effective cooperation. The relationship between China and the US seems paramount in this regard. Particularly APT and the EAS could be subsumed to strategic considerations related to the tense relationship between these two giants. A relevant question in regards to the literature on institutional interaction is, whether they have has a tendency to downplay the role of institutions and interplay management as strategic devises for political influence.

As discussed previously, most informants and authors agree that the EAS was created out of a fear that China was gaining too much influence over the APT. Thus, the EAS was not created because the APT was conceived as being an ineffective platform. It was rather because the APT was perceived to be gaining *too much* momentum. When the US was invited into the EAS, China responded by bringing Russia in. Skeptical analysts have argued that the EAS is now "too diverse and disputatious to be effective" (Emmerson 2010: 3). They have further argued that this may have been an intentional move from Beijing's side, because if EAS was not perceived as an effective platform then APT might gain the role of the institutional

[74] Tan See Seng (2011) argues that both Hilary Clinton and Kevin Rudd has advocated for a clearer functional division of labor between the regional institutions.

driving force for regional integration (ibid). A Chinese actor confirm Beijing's preference for the APT:

> *For ASEAN, I think it paid more attention to EAS in the future. In China, we welcome this kind of enlarged mechanism, but China still maintain that if we talk about the real East Asia, that means that without the many big powers. China still maintains 10+3 as the most important mechanism for regional cooperation and integration in East Asia. (A2 March 2012).*

The APT and the EAS are both led by a multi-sectorial approach, but the APT has stronger operational track record so far. It has an infrastructure that includes pooled resources, concrete policy agendas and commitments from the countries involved (Emmerson 2010: 4). Emmerson (ibid.) claim that the EAS is currently in comparison "not a lot more than a dinner followed by sixteen speeches". When the EAS was established, the current ASEAN Secretary-General Ong Keng Yong (referred to by ibid), argued that this was no more than a "brainstorming forum". In that sense it can be argued that, "the three circles" of East Asian institutions (ASEAN, APT, EAS) go from an operational towards an increasingly strategic character, and that they therefore complement each other rather than compete. With the inclusion of the US into EAS, it hard to speculate, but it will certainly be interesting to follow whether the US will aspire to reform and empower this institution.

As Zhang (2005:36) argue, it is important that the East Asian countries "move in the same direction", if the institutions are to have a synergistic effect on one another. As argued in the previous section, when it comes to pursuing transition efforts, this seems to largely be the case with these two institutions. Converging interests on this matter lead the APT and the EAS. However, in the EAS' Singapore Declaration on Climate change (2007:1), the UNFCCC process is recognized as "the core mechanism for addressing climate change at the global level". Section C (Energy, Environment, Climate Change And Sustainable Development Cooperation) of the ASEAN +3 Work Plan, makes no such argument. As China is considered to be the primus inter pares within APT, and argument can be made to say that this fact illuminates China's preference for climate related arrangements outside the UNFCCC process[75]. An observer from Singapore portrays China as cautious towards the UNFCCC, and more focused on other cooperative arrangements:

[75] However, this proposal remains unconfirmed by empirical material.

> *So China actually is focusing more and more on the bilateral and the multilateral. Clean energy coop, emission cutting cooperation and technology transfer. They are actually interested in this, this kind of materialized cooperation in environmental protection and emission cutting. (O_2 March 2012).*

Summing up the second part of the analysis, no clear-cut answers to the micro-question of effectiveness presented in the introduction, namely: *How can each institution maximize its contribution to the overall governance system with the aim of mitigating or solving a problem of environmental governance?*, can be provided. In the first part, I sought to create concepts for the different features of the fragmented governance structure in East Asia that more precisely captured the form of cooperation within this institutional complex. Afterwards, I found that the interaction between the three most important multilateral arrangements was moderately compatible with two of Stokke's categories for potential pathways to synergistic interaction. However, the strategic use of multilateral institutions in current East Asian relations should not be underestimated. The realist presumption of power based outcomes and "the false promise of international institutions" (Mearsheimer 1994) does therefore not seem too far away. However, both liberalists and realists tend to agree that cooperation on functional issues that does not threaten sovereignty can attain sound results also in this type of environment. Climate change cooperation, interpreted in terms of common strategies to achieve low-carbon growth, may just be such an issue.

8 Concluding discussion

This thesis was led by the overarching empirical research question: *What is the potential for effective climate governance within the regime complex in East Asia?* As well as a theoretically anchored research question: *Is regime theory able to capture the potential for collective action on climate within fragmented governance architectures?* In the following, I will try to answer these question based on the empirical analysis of the East Asian institutional complex for climate change governance. I will first summarize the findings that are relevant for answering the empirical question. Afterwards, I will seek to answer whether the analytical tools developed so far, functioned as good tools for analyzing the collective efforts on climate change in the East Asian region. By that, I will evaluate whether the plausibility probe I have conducted, produced arguments for a sharpening of relevant concepts. Implications for theoretical development will be discussed in light of this.

8.1 Summary of findings

First empirical finding is that there seems to be little enthusiasm for regional cooperation on traditional mitigation efforts in the region. However, all the countries that where evaluated express strong interest in cooperating on transition efforts such as building up and commercializing renewable energy and developing technology for increased energy efficiency. The problem of transition efforts to low carbon growth patterns display a relatively benign interest configuration in terms of economic activity, although increased competition on the "green economy" in East Asia may introduce stronger malignancy into the matrix. The political relations in East Asia however, remain complicated and the rise of China is a source of concern in South East Asia particularly. So far, Chinese foreign policy has been guided by pragmatism, and if they continue down this road, it is probable that the economic relations will dominate the more troublesome political relations. This leaves the potential for deeper regional cooperation in general, appearing as moderately positive. However, although actors in the Chinese central administration emphasize China's economic priorities in the interviews conducted, there is hardly any way to predict if this strategy will not shift with an acceleration of their power capabilities.

In regards to transition efforts, the three strong North East Asian actors – particularly China and Japan, can be categorized as pushers; because deeper regional cooperation on these issues would be in their rational interests. China invests more in developing renewable energy than any other country, and they rely on Japan for the core technology in regards to energy efficiency. The economic integration in North and South East Asia is however, asymmetrical, and so a cooperative arrangement on transition efforts that spans the whole region is unlikely to emerge.

A problematic aspect for regional cooperation is that there is currently no undisputed leader in the region. The recognized principle of "ASEAN-centrality" is more or less empty because of this organization's lack of capabilities and real influence. China faces both internal and external restraints on exercising leadership on regional efforts. Internally, they are still hampered by geographically unbalanced economic growth, with some regions being severely underdeveloped. Externally, the American influence in their remaining "sphere of influence" leaves China with less room for influence unless it is ready to challenge American interests in the region. The empirical findings of this thesis indicate that that is not the case, at the present stage. Relations between China and Japan do, furthermore, not seem ripe for a leadership coalition between these two giants, as comparable to the France-Germany relationship during the emergence of European integration.

In sum, the three dimensions of interest, power and leadership indicates that there are convergent interests relating to the climate change issue that East Asian countries can cooperate on, but that it is unlikely that cooperative efforts will advance in a direction of increased regional integration. Taken together, the driving forces indicate that a fragmented structure for cooperation has a cooperative advantage in the East Asian setting. The absence of institutional integration does therefore not amount to an impediment for deeper regional cooperation. The lack of clear leadership, however, may do so.

The fragmented architecture in East Asia can be classified according to Biermann et.al.'s (2009) categories (synergistic, cooperative or conflictive), as predominantly cooperative, because the institutional integration is led by one core institution: ASEAN and other institutions (APT and EAS) are loosely integrated. Core norms do not seem to conflict (all put much emphasis on sovereignty and non-interference). However in terms of actor

constellation, the structure displays more of a conflictive nature. This is primarily because APT and EAS compete for influence over overlapping issues, and that the issue of membership in one institution has been used strategically to slow down progress in another institution. When APT grew stronger, the US was invited to join the EAS, and many observers have regarded this as a move for containment of Chinese dominance over regional institutions.

Stokke's (2011) framework synergistic interaction in an institutional complex, appear as only mildly relevant for the East Asian complex at this point. Although both in terms of norm building and capacity building, the institutions appear to be contributing to overall effectiveness, there is a low division of labor between the institutions involved. ASEAN has evaluated it to be in their interest to keep the institutions incoherent, rather than to create functional division of labor, in order to keep control of the integration process. This is an interesting finding because in the governance fragmentation literature, it has been argued that fragmentation generally support the interest of the strong. That point aside, there seems to be a strong strategic element to institution building in East Asia at this point of time, and a relatively low normative commitment to regional solutions. This is despite the fact that there appears to be mutual gains to be harvested through deeper regional cooperation on climate related issues.

8.2 Answering the empirical research question

To reiterate, the empirical research question was: *What is the potential for effective climate governance within the regime complex in East Asia?* This thesis cannot answer the question of potential with a graded scale, but that was not either the intention. Rather the objective was to apply theoretical expectations to the East Asian setting, and analyze whether the preconditions for effective cooperation were fulfilled, and what type of structure had been set up to meet the challenge of climate change. The analysis evaluated the cooperative potential from both the actor-centered demand side and the institutional supply side. A governance architecture is thought to carry potential for effective cooperation when these two dimensions converge.

The *demand* for cooperation on transition efforts appear to be present, although it is important to keep in mind that this is a general inference that can be considered as preliminary because

of the high level of abstraction in the analysis. However, even at this level, the image is not clear-cut. Economic relations are characterized by a moderately benign interest configuration, but political relationships are complicated and the reluctance to relax the principle of sovereignty is well anchored.

These actor-specific characteristics have consequences for what type of *supply* of cooperative arrangements, is most adept in terms of contributing to effective problem solving. Much indicates that the current structure has a comparative advantage in East Asia at this point of time. Fragmentation is thus not a problem per se, and much indicates that a bottom-up approach is better adapted to the political situation, than a top-down approach to institution building would be in this region. In that sense, the institutional architecture can be deemed to meet the structure of demand for cooperation in the region. This does not, however, determine the probability for deeper cooperation within the structure. To provide an analogy, although the foundation of a house is adapted to the soil it rests on, this does not determine how the rest of the house will be constructed.

8.3 Answering the theoretical research question

The theoretical research question was: *Is regime theory able to capture the potential for collective action on climate within fragmented governance architectures?* Again, this is a demanding question that does not allow for a simple answer. As demonstrated in this thesis, regime theory is a label that covers a variety of theoretical approaches, but if one stays within the narrower question of regime effectiveness, it is possible to identify a theoretical evolution from the study of effectiveness in regards to a specific regime, over to study effectiveness of regime complexes.

This thesis sought to apply a plausibility prose into the conceptual foundation of the research on regime complexes and the institutional interaction they are results of, while using assumptions from conventional collective action theory as a starting point. The conceptual foundation for classifying degrees of fragmentation within the structure proved relevant, although somewhat imprecise. According to Biermann et.al.'s (2009) classification, the East Asian complex can be categorized as cooperative, but with conflictive elements. The classification is based on a given structure's degree of: institutional integration, norm conflict and actor constellation. Three additional concepts were advanced in this thesis, in regards to

the three categories presented by Biermann et.al (2009), namely complexity, informality and instrumentality. This was done in order to provide a description of the different substantive features of the structure that point more towards the *ways* of cooperation. Due to the profound complexity that is inherent in different institutional complexes, these concepts should not be regarded as findings that are directly applicable to other regional or issue specific complexes, but rather as categories that needs further refinement and investigation in other empirical settings.

Biermann et.al.'s (2009) first category is institutional integration. In regards to this category, the concept of *complexity* is advanced. This concept is related to institutional integration, but captures more of the fluid character of institution building in East Asia. The established institutional structure can generally be described as being built on one core institution (ASEAN), while the others are loosely integrated, but this description misses the ad hoc structure of many cooperative arrangements in East Asia. Complexity may not be a precise and narrow concept, but it more rightfully explains the feature of the cooperative structure in East Asia that has relevance for actor behavior, because institutions have come to life and been liquidated on a rapid basis. Institutional integration should therefore be interpreted in dynamic terms.

The second category is norm conflicts, and here the concept of *informality* is presented. Informality describes the adherence to non-intervention and the priority given to sovereignty in the region. The concept is advanced in order to more accurately describe the situation regarding potential for norm conflicts in East Asia. All the institutions evaluated adhere to the norm of informal cooperation, and this renders potential norm conflicts in specific issue areas less important. When states do not have to commit to normative obligations, then they can use institutions as platforms to identify like-minded partners to solve specific challenges they are facing. Although core norms will not necessarily be aligned, they will neither have disruptive effects in such a setting.

The third category is actor constellation, and in regards to this category, this thesis presents *instrumentality* as a substantive concept. Biermann et.al.'s (2009) category of actor constellation refers to whether relevant actors support the same institutions or not, but in East Asia this is hard to describe in static terms. Both in China and Singapore, informants argued

that actors are open to advance their interests within all institutions in principal. The approach to different institutions is based on utilitarian considerations rather than normative commitment. An institution may help one country advance their national interest today, but tomorrow it might be a different institution. This is symptomatic for the dynamic character of cooperation in East Asia. Below is a summary of how the substantive concepts relate to the categories presented by Biermann et.al (2009).

Table 3. Concepts to describe form and content of governance fragmentation

Biermanns et.al.'s (2009) classification of fragmented structures	Substantive concepts that describe the features of fragmentation in East Asia
Institutional integration	Complexity
Norm conflict	Informality
Actor constellation	Instrumentality

8.4 Implications of findings

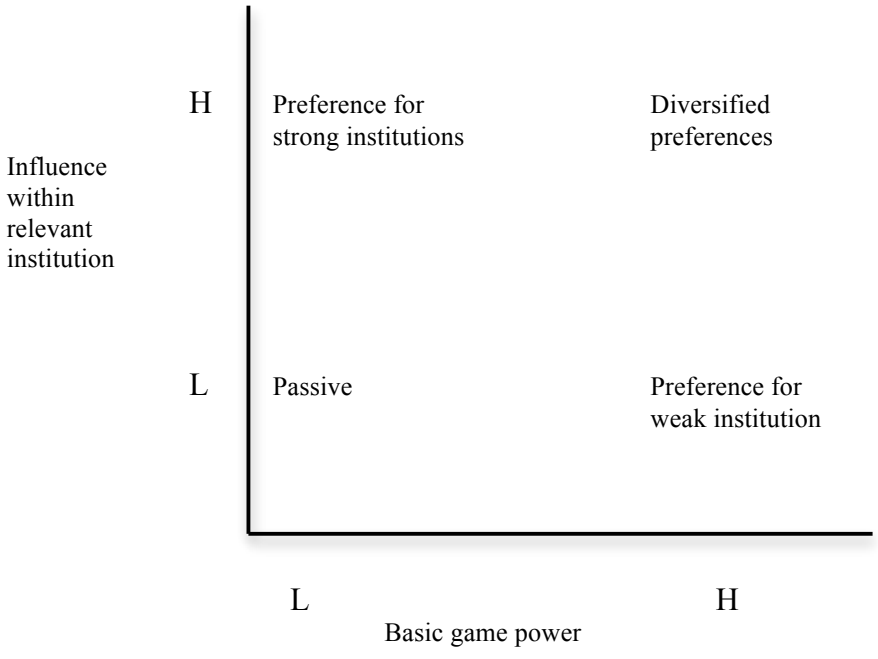
This thesis sought to tie the study of the East Asian regime complex to the more general debate on governance fragmentation within the climate change issue area on a global scale. With this in mind, the empirical analysis pays particular attention towards the logic of a building blocks approach as a tool for climate change governance, and aims to contribute to our understanding of when fragmented structures are effective means of governance. Given that different cooperative structures relevant for climate change mitigation are so diverse, as well as the fact that the findings of this thesis is not unambiguous, it is not a straightforward task to generalize the findings from the East Asian region to other climate relevant regime complexes. I will rather argue that the findings have relevance as suggestions for what represents interesting fields for future studies, both in relation to the East Asian architecture and to climate change governance.

One of the most central findings in this thesis is that actors' approaches to regional institutions appears to be led by more strategic concerns than by collective problem-solving at this point, although pragmatism is also a visible feature. A consequence of this strategic

element in regards to institution building is that the actor-centered variables stand out as the most interesting. Future research on East Asian cooperation could advance to use this region as a case for analyzing actor's strategies within complex institutional settings. A preliminary account of potentially generalizable implications based on the findings of this thesis produce hypotheses that can be further explored in other contributions that pursue such options.

As argued previously, the fragmented structure will not necessarily be an impediment to deeper cooperation, but institutional complexity will imply that different countries will respond differently to different types of cooperation. Deeper cooperation within a given forum is dependent on actors' willingness to commit to that specific forum. With institutional complexity as a starting point, hypotheses can be derived on the different conditions, under which actors commit to a forum. It can generally be argued that complexity is a difficult starting point for building elegant models. A preliminary figurative presentation based on the main findings of this thesis can still be outlined. The figure presented below, draws on the two dimensions that the rationalist literature considers as being crucial factors for effective cooperation, namely interests and power. More specifically, it models the level of ability an actor may have to influence the institution so as to reflect their national interests, up against control of the basic game.

Figure 3. Institutional influence vs. control of basic game:



Countries belonging to categories that either have low value on both dimensions, or high value on both dimensions, are likely to either be passive or to have heterogenic strategies that are difficult to produce general propositions about, and they are thus a problematic starting point for generating hypotheses. The combination of high and low values does perhaps represent categories, on which it is less demanding to advance hypotheses for further research. In the following, I will seek to outline two potential hypotheses regarding these categories.

The first category is located in the upper left hand side of the figure, and represents those actors who have low control over the basic game, but high influence on the relevant institution so that they are able to get the institution to reflect their national interest. This category may refer to situations when countries are able to do this because they are part of a winning coalition based on numeric majority[76], but an actor may also influence an institution through other means. In the East Asian institutional complex, ASEAN enjoys influence within the regional institutions primarily because they constitute the platform from which regional institutions emerge. They are nonetheless in a situation of low basic game power. This category suggests a hypothesis that could be used to pursue an analysis of actor strategies within institutional complexes:

> *Hypothesis 1: Actors who are able to get an institution to reflect their interests are likely to push for stronger institutions.*

The second category is located on the lower right hand side of the figure. In this position, a country enjoys significant control over the basic game, but may still be unable to get the institution to reflect their national interests. In the East Asian setting, China potentially falls in this category when it comes to EAS, after the US was recently included as a member. This might be one explanation to why China has explicitly advocated APT as the primary forum for East Asian cooperation, and as argued, China's move to invite Russia into the EAS has been interpreted as a balancing act towards the American influence rather than a contribution to progress within this institution. A second hypothesis might thus be interesting to pursue further:

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[76] In the global climate change negotiations, the small island states have joined a colaition with the EU so that their influence now significantly surpasses their basic game power. KILDE!!

Hypothesis 2: Strong countries that are not able to get the institution to reflect their national interest are likely to impede progress towards deeper cooperation.

8.5 Conclusion

The million-dollar question thus seems to be: will East Asia see strong institutions that are able to carry the challenge of climate change in the time to come? A Master's Thesis generally provides for a poor crystal ball, and this one is no exception. Nonetheless, one rather uncontroversial prediction that can be put forward, and that extensive empirical findings support, is that it is not likely that a new EU will emerge in the East Asian region within the coming decade. However, as this thesis has argued, that does not necessarily mean that intergovernmental cooperation cannot achieve significant results. Not all issues represent a threat to sovereignty, and a differentiated approach to institution building can capitalize on diversity rather than be restrained by it. Working from the bottom up by applying a building blocks approach will present possibilities that are not present in a top down approach to cooperation. The variation in potential for effective cooperation, is nonetheless striking. In line with collective action theory, the answer to the probability of specific outcomes in specific situations is likely to be found with the actors themselves.

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